Employment and Immigration Canada
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# CANADA

## A SOURCE BOOK FOR ORIENTATION, LANGUAGE AND SETTLEMENT WORKERS

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Canada

# Canada

## A Source Book

for

### Orientation, Language and Settlement Workers

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This book, *Canada, A Source Book,* is one of an integrated set of four documents designed to help newcomers adapt to Canada. Two books present information in English and French to people who work with newcomers (this book and *Working with Newcomers*). Two other publications offer a digest of the same information to newcomers themselves in a variety of languages *(Getting Started in Canada, and A Newcomer's Guide to Canada).*

*Aussi disponible en français*

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## Foreword: How to use this Book

*Canada, A Source Book for Orientation, Language and Settlement Workers* is an information resource for people who help newcomers. It helps second language teachers plan the content of their courses, and makes it easier for settlement agency workers to respond to newcomers' needs.

The *Source Book* is not a curriculum or a manual, and still less a course outline. It includes much more information than could be realistically attempted in teaching a single class of students or counselling a group of newcomers, particularly if their language skills are very basic. However, teachers, immigration and settlement workers can often find themselves seeking an answer to a question from people whose desire to understand is greater than their language skills. This book offers a clear and accurate answer to many such questions, in many cases together with cautions, corollaries and related issues that may help the person answering the question.

The method which this book advocates is question-and-answer, with the newcomer asking the questions. This avoids the common communication mistake of swamping people with confusing information, only some of which they need at the time.

The ultimate objective of the *Source Book* is to provide newcomers with a better understanding of Canada. For some, this is a matter of grasping basic concepts. Others have more sophisticated information needs even though their language skills may not be fully developed. It is for this reason that this *Source Book* provides material at both the level of survival needs, as well as with respect to those "higher needs" that newcomers frequently mention when they are asked why they chose Canada.

## Method

*Canada, A Source Book for Orientation, Language and Settlement Workers* is based on experience. It is therefore presented in the form of questions and responses from the point of view of the newcomers — as opposed to the established Canadian. This communication technique produces opportunities for newcomers to practice language skills while simultaneously learning to deal with a new culture.

Each section is introduced by a question that invites newcomers to talk about the customs of their *own* country, thereby involving them in using the language and concepts they are learning to express what is familiar to them. As they are going through this process, the teacher, immigration or settlement worker has the opportunity to listen to the newcomer setting up a context of knowledge in which the communication process can continue. This approach ensures that each interaction is specific to individual needs. It also leads naturally to effective discussions of what is Canadian and new to the newcomers in a framework that is jointly understood, instead of forcing the helper to make assumptions about knowlege level and point of view. The experience of successful second language teachers and effective workers with newcomers points to the effectiveness of this process.

Open discussion of cultural differences is the method most likely to help newcomers adapt to Canada. Most people like to talk about their own cultural preferences and traditions. Indeed, thanks to the variety of origins among Canadians, one's heritage is an acceptable, and characteristically Canadian topic of conversation. In such an exchange of views, there is a natural opportunity for newcomers to adapt to new ways while learning a new language. It also allows them to recognize the tolerance for individuality that is a part of Canadian culture.

This approach offers practical opportunities to newcomers who are learning a new language and learning about Canadian customs and values; it confirms their self-worth by encouraging them to talk positively about their own cultural backgrounds, and it responds to their stated need to know more about their new country.

Teaching suggestions that were collected for the use of ESL and FSL teachers are retained in this edition so that they can be used for leaders of discussion groups, training sessions and the like.

## Organization

There are three ways of using the *Source Book*. It can be:

1. read from cover to cover as a general preparation for questions that may arise,
2. consulted in response to the needs of particular classes or individuals,
3. consulted topic by topic with the help of the Index.

The *Source Book's* organizational principle is a hierarchy of needs. The book is divided into five parts, each corresponding with a level of need, starting with urgent physical needs and ending with intangible, personal aspirations. It begins with physical concerns such as food, clothing and shelter; and ends by examining intellectual and spiritual needs such as aspirations, goals and a sense of personal worth.

At the most basic level, there are Survival Needs, that is, those immediate physical needs that must be fulfilled to sustain life. As they relate to the business of merely staying alive, food, clothing and shelter are survival needs. Next come Safety Needs, that is, needs that must be fulfilled to avoid anxiety about survival. Safety needs are those that are prompted by the fears people experience the moment they are no longer hungry, naked and homeless. Love and Social Needs are those prompted by family ties and interactions with the people one meets each day. These first three levels of need are those experienced by all newcomers to some degree in their first few days or weeks in Canada.

The last two levels in the hierarchy are Esteem Needs and Self-Actualization Needs. The central Esteem Need is to be recognized as an individual and to be valued *by society*. In Canada, a career, job or life role tells people who and what each person is and does by way of contribution to society. These activities are central to satisfying most Canadians' esteem needs. The last level, Self-Actualization, deals with the need to achieve self-worth *in one's own eyes*.

Clearly, there is conceptual overlap among the five different levels, and immense variety among the different ways in which individual people respond to them. Nonetheless, the hierarchy has an intuitive validity for the purposes of this *Source Book*, not least *because* the classifications are somewhat "grey at the edges."

The five parts are further divided into chapters that deal with specific topics such as clothing, shelter, health, holidays, religion and so on. There is deliberate overlapping among the five parts, in order to correspond to the level of the need. For example, a newcomer needs to know basic human rights as soon as possible; whereas history and politics are issues that usually come later. Similarly, interpersonal needs such as avoiding embarrassment are treated as Survival Needs in part one; whereas meeting people, dating and marriage customs appear in Love and Social Needs, part three. Users should feel free to move back and forth through the book, taking what is most appropriate to the needs of each class, group or individual. The complexity and sophistication of the teaching suggestions also increase as the book progresses.

The *Source Book* is *not* a lesson plan that suggests an orientation session or class should first be devoted to geography, the next to weather, the next to food, and so on. Specific cultural characteristics are introduced by questions that can be used to set up context and stimulate discussion. Each question asks newcomers to reflect on the relevant customs in their own country, so that they can understand, assess and practice Canadian patterns of behaviour in an experiential context. At the same time, their answer allows the helper to understand "where the speaker is coming from." "See also...." references link similar topics and provide comparisons and contrasts.

Talking about basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter leads naturally to issues of self-fulfillment and aspiration, because we all express who we are and what we value in the foods we eat, the clothes we wear, the houses we live in and the work we do. Teachers, immigration and settlement workers should feel free to browse back and forth in the *Source Book*, and to use the later chapters to enhance the earlier ones in response to newcomers' questions.

- For example, the food we eat and how we eat it involves more than ingesting enough calories and vitamins to survive. It has been said that animals eat, but human beings dine. The way we eat can also be an expression of cultural identity, a family ritual, a means of social interaction or a central focus of religion.

Clearly, it is not helpful to overpower newcomers with detail. Rather, they need to understand core concepts that will help them make sense of what they are about to experience. Accordingly, each chapter in this *Source Book* starts with a core concept, which is followed by more detailed questions and responses focussed on aspects of Canadian culture.

The *Source Book* addresses newcomers' needs conceptually, pointing first to obvious and necessary facts, later to more subtle issues that are intangible. Accordingly, the questions on which the *Source Book* is structured are kept simple.

The *Source Book* uses words that will often be beyond the newcomers' present vocabulary. Although every attempt has been made to identify problematical words and meanings that are difficult to communicate, the *Source Book* is, in the final analysis, addressed to newcomers *through* teachers, immigration and settlement workers. Communicating effectively to people with different levels of language skill is up to the individual user.

Almost every statement about a country as large and diverse as Canada can be qualified. Although the *Source Book* makes generous use of words such as "generally," "in the main," "on the average," and their synonyms, the teacher, immigration or settlement person should be constantly on guard against simplistic statements that do not take the whole of Canada into consideration.

- For example, it is easy for someone who knows only Ontario to forget how much the climate of Vancouver and Victoria differ from central Canada — particularly if a student asks for a description of a typical January day in Canada. Obviously, generalizations based on Ontario and Quebec will be at best misleading for newcomers from the Pacific Rim, who are most likely to enter Canada via Vancouver.

This *Source Book* is not exhaustive, and never can be. However, it will be an on-going project that adapts to the changing nature of immigration. New situations, different languages, changing programs and policies will all have an effect on content, and for this reason the book will be updated frequently. Employment and Immigration Canada encourages readers to submit additions, corrections, adaptations and suggestions on the "SUGGESTION" sheets so that future editions of *Canada, A Source Book for Orientation, Language and Settlement Workers* will become even more useful.

## Shared Symbols of Canada 1

The **maple leaf** is the official emblem of Canada, appearing on the flag, on both the one-cent and the gold collectors' coin, in the coats of arms of Canada and several of the provinces, and in stylized form on the uniforms of Canadian international sports teams. The maple leaf is perhaps the best-known official emblem of Canada, and is recognized around the world.

Maple trees grow between the Prairies and the Atlantic coast, and on the West coast. There are many sub-species of maple, but the best known is the "sugar" maple that turns brilliant scarlet in the autumn. In the spring, the sap of the sugar maple is collected and then reduced by boiling into a distinctive sweet syrup, often served with pancakes or waffles.

## Introduction: On Canadian Culture

Culture permeates everything we do and are, and particularly conditions the ways in which we communicate. A nation's culture is a collection of values and assumptions — most of them uncodified, unvoiced and unconsciously held — that allows all the many and varied citizens of that country to live and work together in relative harmony. Each country has a cultural identity that is as unique as a fingerprint. Most of the time, people are no more aware of their cultural patterns than they are of the distinctive curls and swirls on their own thumbs. However, when one moves from one society to another, it becomes clear that not all the world shares the same assumptions. It is therefore essential that newcomers be aware of and adapt to Canadian culture, and that those who work with them are sensitive to cultural differences.

Culture in this expanded sense is more than taking pride in national symbols, or having an appreciation of distinctively Canadian art, film, writing, painting or other significant achievements. Acquiring an understanding of Canadian culture implies such things as a sense of and a respect for Canada's multicultural heritage. It also includes more immediate and everyday matters such as learning that Canadians put the hot tap on the left, that they frequently say, "Have a nice day," and that they consider that being more than five minutes late for a business appointment is unacceptable behaviour.

Accordingly, for the purposes of this *Source Book*, "culture" is a larger concern than the choice of a flag, the uniform of a police force, or the languages used in official government correspondence. In this expanded sense, "culture" refers to the sum total of the ways in which many peoples live together in Canada.

Since language is the most obvious vehicle for transmitting a culture, teaching English or French to newcomers provides an opportunity to introduce not only words, idioms and usage, but also a deeper understanding of what it means to live in Canada. Newcomers to Canada need to learn one or both of the two official languages; and at the same time, they also need to learn many other communication conventions that shape the ways in which Canadians behave. Conversely, as they learn the ways of Canadians, they will add to their language skills. Essentially, all language teachers convey Canadian culture, and all settlement and immigration workers help people learn a new language.

There is abundant evidence that newcomers want and need to be better informed about life in Canada. Every little item that they learn about their new country, no matter how basic or even trivial it may seem to someone already living in Canada, helps lessen the stresses placed on all newcomers as they integrate into Canadian society.

- Consider the mental state of a newcomer who has dealt successfully with all the difficulties of the first weeks in Canada, who has coped with travel, interacted with officials, chosen accommodation, bought food and applied to the Canada Employment Centre — all in a language he speaks imperfectly — only to be told that there are no job openings for a person of his skills and background. When he attempts to explain that his qualifications are excellent, the official seems to denigrate both his accomplishments and the excellence of his degrees and diplomas by saying, "Yes, that's all very well for over there, but here in Canada you've got to be properly qualified."

- Think how a newcomer must feel, when she has finally found a job and worked for two weeks, only to discover on receipt of her first pay cheque that one quarter of her agreed-upon salary has disappeared into a series of deductions obscurely labelled "Fed Tax, Prov Tax, UI, CPP, Union Dues, Other." When she asks why her pay cheque is so much smaller than her expectations, she receives a blank stare. In what she feels is a patronizing tone of voice, the accountant shrugs and says, "Those are the deductions. Everyone has to pay them."

- Imagine the chagrin experienced by a woman who misunderstands the information she receives from a weather forecast. Heartened by a radio announcer telling her, "Well, folks, winter's last cold snap is over. Today we'll have the first of a week of warm, mostly sunny spring days, " she wears her spring dress, puts a light sweater over one arm, and is totally unprepared for the unexpected shower of wet snow that drenches her when she changes buses on her way to language training classes. When she arrives, instead of sympathy, she is confronted by what she interprets as ridicule on the faces of the established Canadians.

The foregoing three anecdotes epitomize reasons why many newcomers become exasperated that nobody bothered to tell them what to expect in Canada. Newcomers have an urgent need to know how to live in Canada, and learning English or French is only one facet of their problem. Unlike a Canadian taking a foreign language in school or university, for whom a good mark on the final examination is proof enough of success, newcomers are not merely "learning English"; they are learning to adapt and feel at home.

None of the misadventures in our examples would happen to Canadians, because they all know the necessary cultural context. They acquired this knowledge unconsciously, and are unaware of a time when they did *not* understand these kinds of situation that are problematical to newcomers.

When people move to a different culture, they lose many of the cues by which they establish meaning in their lives; and their personal universe becomes unbalanced. Lacking a familiar frame of reference, they experience fear, anxiety, helplessness and sometimes anger, because they have lost control over their environment.

Anyone can experience this sense of dislocation by taking a holiday in a foreign country. However, where the holiday-maker goes insulated with plans, tickets, reservations, spare money and above all the knowledge that home is only a return flight away, most newcomers lack all these options.

Sociologists refer to this experience as "culture shock." It is normal, healthy and to be expected. In some cases, culture shock can be a positive and exciting experience that leads towards adaptation. However, it can also be debilitating, especially if it is unexpected, severe and long-lasting. The experience of going through culture shock has been accurately described as a "grieving period" comparable to that experienced by someone who has suffered a bereavement. If during this period the newcomer meets people who constantly expect him or her to celebrate Canada and immediately adopt Canadian ways, the psychological results can be debilitating.

When their identities are threatened, people withdraw. This is why culture shock can isolate newcomers even from those who would like to help them. Conversely, communication brings people together and enables them to act for themselves. When a person makes contact with another human being, however imperfectly, he or she becomes able to reassert control over life.

Newcomers fare much better in adapting to Canadian culture if they are soon aware of the cultural context into which they are moving, in addition to the command of some basic English or French. This book was compiled in part to fulfil that need. By becoming accustomed to some of the new ideas and concepts with which they will soon be living, newcomers cushion the shock of arrival in Canada, where they will face new roles, relationships, temporal and spatial concepts, concepts of the individual within society, and all the many other cultural variables. Armed with this advance information, they also learn English or French much more quickly and effectively.

## The Consequences of Newcomer's Decisions

Choosing to emigrate to Canada is no light decision. Newcomers must say goodbye to family members, friends and familiar places. They also leave behind them the familiar workings of a society in which they have been brought up. In place of the social environment they know, they are confronted by a bewildering array of cultural differences that must be mastered if they are to live and prosper in their new country. It makes no difference that newcomers may have left behind them circumstances in their old countries that are unpleasant — even miserable or dangerous. Nevertheless, from time to time, they all feel a sense of loss, isolation and uncertainty that might be called homesickness were it not for the fact that going home is not usually an option. For some, this discomfort can reach the level of severe emotional distress that makes it difficult if not impossible for them to function normally.

Clearly, Canada has an obligation to provide newcomers with the useful welcoming gift of an introduction to the way Canadians live. Teachers of English and French as a second language, orientation and settlement workers are at the front line of this endeavour.

## Culture as Conventions and Behaviours

As has already been stated, Canadian culture, as newcomers need to understand it, is that undercurrent of social conventions that we hold in common, regardless of our ancestors' countries of origin, or whether we speak English or French. Most of the time, we are not aware of these behaviour patterns, simply because they are so familiar that they give us the feeling that ours is the only way to live. Those who have travelled extensively outside Canada, who have taught English or French as a second language, or who have interacted with newcomers on a regular basis, are much more conscious of the arbitrary nature of the cultural patterns that pervade every aspect of our lives.

To be at home in Canada, newcomers must master a new system of interaction with components that range from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to table manners, and from legal obligations to the way Canadians shake hands.

Learning to feel at home in a new country takes time. Most newcomers experience three phases in this process. Some people adapt more quickly than others; some take longer or shorter times to undergo one or more stages, and some people pass back and forth between one phase and another, or get stuck in a phase. Deprived of help and isolated in a new society, some newcomers find the whole process close to unbearable.

- *Phase One* takes place in the time prior to, or shortly after arriving in the new country. By this time, newcomers have decided to go to Canada because they have high hopes for themselves and great expectations about their destination. These highly personal, vivid and often inaccurate hopes and expectations are sharpest during the few weeks before leaving the old country. It is often called the "honeymoon" stage, in that although the stresses are greatest, so are the psychological resources.

This *Source Book* is primarily focussed on helping teachers, orientation and settlement workers provide newcomers with a more realistic picture of their new life that will prepare them for the difficulties as well as the joys they are sure to encounter.

- *Phase Two* takes place between arrival and the end of the first half-year in Canada. This six-month period is characterized by shock and adaptation as newcomers not only discover new experiences, but also find that some of their expectations were inaccurate. It is as much a period of self-discovery as it is a learning of new ways, and can be highly unsettling, confusing, frustrating and depressing. Some people are exhilarated by the challenge, some are overwhelmed by its enormity. Either reaction is normal. Teachers, orientation and settlement workers should understand that even though one newcomer may seem over-excited, another withdrawn, another aggressive, another passive, all deserve equal (although different) attention.

- *Phase Three* ends almost imperceptibly, as newcomers come to the realization that "home" is now in Canada as opposed to their country of origin. This may take many years for some people, particularly those older people for whom sheer quantity of experience has established strong habit patterns; and be relatively quick for others, particularly children and younger people whose habits are not so deeply ingrained. However, for the majority of newcomers, by the time they have been in Canada for five years, most further changes in their attitude and behaviour will be relatively slight and highly personal. By that time, they will have completed the major adjustments necessary to living comfortably in Canada.

Along the way to this state of mind, newcomers learn facts, attitudes, values and behaviours, often without being aware of the changes that have taken place in their lives. Thereafter, although there may be

> some changes in a person's outlook, he or she has usually integrated "Canadianness" into his or her personality.
>
> Becoming a Canadian citizen is an objective milestone during this third stage. This formal, legal step is often an outward sign of psychological changes that are both subtle and far-reaching.

The first of these three stages takes the shortest time, but is the most important in that it conditions all that follows. If newcomers arrive in Canada bearing too great a burden of misconceptions and misapprehensions, they will have so much to unlearn that their first six months will be unusually difficult. If on the other hand, they have realistic anticipations about themselves in a Canadian context, they are more likely to make the necessary adjustments with ease.

The beginnings and endings of the second and third stages are less easy to define, because individual experiences will vary. For some, the process is straightforward and complete; for others it is partial, with some adaptions to life in Canada in areas such as social, sexual and familial relations lagging behind other aspects such as economic activity.

## Avoiding Giving and Receiving Offense

When people from different cultures meet, whether in a classroom or in ordinary day-to-day encounters, it is very easy both to offend and to be offended. Accordingly, teachers, orientation and settlement workers must show respect for newcomers' cultures while they are introducing them to

Canadian standards of conduct. They must therefore be acutely aware of their own perceptions and reactions.

- For example, some Canadians are shocked to see a woman following two paces behind her husband. Nevertheless, this is a custom hallowed by generations of observance in a number of societies, and it would be a gross intrusion into their privacy to admonish such a couple to abandon the behaviour.

- For another example, averting or lowering the eyes may be interpreted by many Canadians as insincerity or even dishonesty, whereas to a newcomer this action may be an expression of politeness and respect. For a newcomer to alter this cultural pattern is a difficult process of re-learning that requires practice and encouragement rather than admonitions — no matter how well meant.

Newcomers bring cultural conventions with them that are as much a part of themselves as are Canadians' cultural assumptions. Consequently, teachers, orientation and settlement workers must be aware that to newcomers, our Canadian way may not necessarily seem "better," and may even seem "worse."

- For example, the general Canadian cultural pattern is for children to live apart from their parents as soon as they are adults, particularly when they marry. To many newcomers, this behaviour seems regrettable — even immoral — particularly when it comes to elderly parents living on their own, in senior citizens' housing or in nursing homes.

- Unintended meanings abound in the the ways people eat food. Most Canadians share the same technique of eating most food with knives and forks, each from his or her own plate. They feel that to use fingers to eat from a common bowl is both socially unacceptable and unhygienic. However, people from other societies use different eating implements; and some feel strongly that a common bowl of food is an expression of mutual trust and family solidarity.

In some cases, Canadian behaviour lies between two cultural extremes.

- To newcomers from countries with strict rules about what constitutes appropriate clothing, Canadian women may seem licentious simply by wearing trousers or shorts: whereas to newcomers from other countries, Canadians seem prudish when we insist that women's bathing suits cover their breasts.

- Public displays of emotion and affection offer a similar example. To some newcomers, Canadians may seem stiff, cold and standoffish; while to others, some Canadians' behaviour is a source of embarrassment or even shame. Canadians seem undemonstrative to many people from Hispanic or Latin cultures, whereas many Asian people are deeply embarrassed by seeing Canadians touch, embrace or kiss in public.

The questioning method favoured by this book can help Canadians discover the necessary context of the individual newcomer's point of view on these culturally-varied end highly-charged subjects.

Both teachers and students should also be aware of the considerable diversity that also exists among Canadians.

> Some Canadians only feel comfortable exchanging a handshake; while others regularly embrace or kiss in public. Canadians can find themselves offering misleading information if they define the accepted Canadian pattern too rigidly. However, it should be noted that there are almost always generally-accepted limits. For example, all but a few Canadians object to passionate, long, or drawn-out kissing and embracing in public. Moreover, such a statement is much more useful to newcomers in that it defines a cultural limit relatively objectively and simply.

Cultural differences in matters such as politeness, individuality, and the role of the state are difficult to communicate directly. The onus is on the helper to avoid misperceptions, to detect them early, and to respond empathically to correct them. Sometimes this means dealing with misunderstandings between newcomers themselves, particularly when a class or group is made up of people from different cultural backgrounds. Such a clash of opinions should not be feared. Far from being a disaster, it provides an excellent opportunity for newcomers to practice the kind of tolerance that Canadians idealize.

As has already been noted, younger newcomers may be more adaptable than older people who have experienced more personality-shaping events. It is important to recognize that these generational differences can separate newcomers from their own family members. Parents and children may grow apart as they adapt to Canadian ways at different speeds and to different degrees. Sensitive people will recognize variations in newcomers' ability to adapt, and respond to them individually.

Newcomers in the same family unit or social group can experience polar reactions to aspects of Canadian society. Some withdraw into the exclusive company of their own people, who protect them from change. This is particularly the case for older people, and women from societies where men hold very dominant roles. By contrast, other newcomers, particularly teenagers and young adults, sometimes try to Canadianize themselves by imitating fictional heroes in movies or on television. As a consequence, their choice of clothes, companions and music can be deeply offensive to their parents and other newcomers from the same country. In cases such as these, the consequent misunderstandings can be particularly painful to all concerned.

For all these reasons, *Canada, A Source Book for Orientation, Language and Settlement Workers* tries to be descriptive rather than prescriptive. It offers information that may help make newcomers more aware, so that their decisions about Canadian cultural patterns are based on understanding. The *Source Book* suggests that helpers should say to newcomers, "Here is a new way of living which is our way, and a way you may learn to like," rather than "This is the best, the only, the Canadian way."

Throughout the *Source Book*, words such as "generally," "usually," "many Canadians," or "most Canadians" have been used liberally. Even when they are not present, these words are certainly implied. Every effort should be taken to ensure that newcomers are aware of the varieties in the Canadian experience.

Nonetheless, newcomers should not decide that Canada's wide range of cultural behaviours means that Canada has no standards or values, or that all behaviours are acceptable. The task of teachers, orientation and settlement workers is to show newcomers the limits of Canadian conventions, and to help them be content within those limits.

## Degrees of Approval and Disapproval

Newcomers often have difficulty identifying whether a prohibition is a matter of private taste, public morality or enforced law. It is helpful to remember that in Canada as in many other parts of the world there are many gradations of acceptability, from what is tolerated or conventional, on through what is preferred, finally to what is mandatory. Since cultural patterns overlap with personal, religious and moral codes, behaviour that is acceptable and even admired in Canada may seem immoral, or at least questionable, to some newcomers — and vice versa.

- For example, in some cultures with stronger paternalistic cultural norms than most of Canada, it is *immoral* (not merely "bold," "rude," "naturally and healthily rebellious," or "a necessary part of the learning process") for a child to disagree with a parent or teacher.

- For another example, it is difficult for some newcomers to recognize that in Canada it is *illegal* for an adult parent to beat a child or a husband to beat his wife.

## Maintaining an Objective Cultural Viewpoint

It is not always easy to maintain an appropriate objectivity. Reactions are sometimes quicker than deliberate thought, and offence can be taken even though it has not been intended. For this reason it is usually ineffective — and may even be perceived as insulting — for someone to offer well-intentioned lectures on the superiority of Canada's democratic institutions, racial and sexual equality laws or dietary preferences.

Cultural objectivity and effective second-language learning go hand in hand. The technique is to encourage newcomers first to state what they know to provide a basis for discussion of new information, attitudes and the addition of further linguistic skills. In this approach, the teacher has the role of linguistic and cultural resource person rather than authoritarian instructor.

Sometimes, a class or group of newcomers will be homogeneous with respect to language, and it is possible to make relatively simple comparisons and contrasts between their culture and Canada. However, there will always be differences of sex, socio-economic background, age, and education among the people in the class, which frequently means that there will be a difference of opinion about their *own* customs, laws and norms. Such differences of opinion can often be used to foster a receptive attitude towards Canadian culture.

More often, there will be representatives of different linguistic, national and racial groups within the same class or group. The teacher, orientation or settlement worker then has the role of a facilitator and mediator who helps collect and examine statements that may be in opposition. It is essential never to side with one cultural group against another. Rather, when all the various opinions have been proposed, often the class or group starts to look for a neutral position about which they can all agree. Frequently, they ask for information about Canada using the very questions around which this *Source Book* organizes problems and issues. The resultant discussions can be critical events in helping newcomers develop a greater awareness of their new environment.

## Perceptions and Misperceptions of Canada

There is a natural desire on the part of anyone asked about his or her country to try to be an ambassador for Canada, and to dwell on all that is best and most attractive. When combined with newcomers' wishes to justify their choice of Canada, this can lead to misunderstanding. For example:

- The degree to which Canada cares for newcomers

On the one hand, all newcomers should be aware of their rights. An understanding of government and private support agencies is therefore an essential component of welcoming people to Canada.

On the other hand, newcomers from countries that lack Canada's high level of social assistance can misperceive our system. On occasion, newcomers have expressed the expectation that government and non-government agencies will do absolutely everything for them: find them jobs, homes, baby-sitters, and so on.

The misunderstanding occurs because the newcomers have not recognized that both government and non-government agencies are only there to *help* people find jobs, homes etc., and to act as a bridge leading towards self-sufficiency. Well-meaning people can exacerbate this problem if they do not stress that the *right* to government social assistance implies a *responsibility* to become self-supporting.

The antithetical situation also occurs regularly. Newcomers may resent what they regard as interference in their privacy, and reject help for reasons that are sometimes incomprehensible to a Canadian.

- For example, a routine health checkup at a school led to a child being diagnosed as hard of hearing and in need of what most Canadians would see as a relatively minor medical procedure. When the family was consulted, they rejected all help because they felt that they had been shamed for having a less than perfect child. This was made sharper because the family perceived medicare to be free and therefore "taking charity." It was necessary for the Canadians involved to skirt carefully around family pride as they resolved the matter.

Problems such as these may be further complicated by the misapprehension that the entire family's immigrant status could be cancelled because of one family member's medical difficulty.

In all cases, sensitive understanding of the exact nature of the difficulty is a necessary condition to offering the appropriate advice or reassurance.

- The Canadian view of individual *responsibility*

Canada's concept of individuality is so basic to Canadians' lives that they seldom question the assumptions that flow from it. Canadians in general are individualists, that is, they see each person as being in charge of his or her own destiny, and responsible for his or her own fate. Nonetheless, Canadians are not as individualistic as their American counterparts in that they are more willing to accept a *joint* or *societal* responsibility — a tendency demonstrated by the existence of Canada's system of social security.

Many newcomers' difficulties in adjusting to life in Canada arise from different perceptions about, and different values placed on individuality. People from the countries of Eastern Europe that have several generations of experience with Communism do not share the same views as people from Asian, African or Latin American countries — and there are many shades of difference among the different national and ethnic divisions within all of these larger categories.

The way people conceptualize their own and others' individuality is by no means universal. These concepts are shaped overtly by politics and ideology, and more subtly by the long-established patterns of life, particularly in rural, agrarian, village-based, non-industrialized countries. Whatever the cause, the effect is a different view of self and others from what Canadians have learned to expect. Sensitive teachers will be aware of this problem as it affects both their students and themselves.

Similarly, when people come from nations in which religion and politics are not separated, or from countries that retain a hierarchical system in which power is equated with maleness, age and inherited position, it is not surprising if they find difficulty adjusting to Canadian patterns of behaviour.

- The meanings, extent and implications of politeness

Politeness, or the way that we care for others' feelings, is not a universal code. To many Americans, Canadians seem polite; to some Europeans, Canadians seem gauche. Newcomers can mistake what Canadians call being honest as rudeness; or conversely, misunderstand casual polite conventions to be profound interpersonal commitments.

The consequences of these misperceptions range from the amusing to the drastic. They are most likely to happen as a result of the first impressions about Canada that are created by teachers, hosts and government officials.

In all cases, the objective is to increase awareness and understanding of Canadian ways, even though it may take some time before the newcomers feel comfortable in their new country.

## The Mosaic of Canadian Culture

Canadian society has been called a multicultural mosaic made up of many ways of life, each with distinct characteristics. Over the course of our national history, millions of people have come to live in Canada, and in so doing, influenced Canada. Excepting only the First Peoples (as the Inuit and the Indians prefer to call themselves) all Canadians are of immigrant origin.

In this context, adaptation and integration do not imply either assimilation or conformity. In Canada, people may adapt to new ways of life while maintaining a respect for the best of the past. This in turn requires that those who deal directly with newcomers in their first months or years in Canada be accepting of the contribution being made by those who have deliberately chosen to come to this country.

As each national group — indeed, as each person — is integrated into Canada, the entire country is altered to some slight degree. All newcomers arrive with the experiences and memories that have formed their personalities. The culture of at least one country has helped shape their lives. This experience is not mere "baggage"; it is the stuff of each newcomer's life, and is what he or she contributes to Canada. Canadians have to continually remind themselves that if newcomers were to lose their cultural identities, they would have less to contribute and share. It is very important that they are not viewed as "deficient" or "lacking" some aspect of Canadianness that is necessarily better than what they bring.

Culture does not stand apart from us as a subject to be learned or a system to be followed. All of us transmit, participate in, and help create our culture. When we interact with newcomers, we are changed, usually for the better.

## Canada, a Bilingual Country

Official bilingualism is an important characteristic of Canada. The use of English and French in Parliament, in courts of law when required, and normally in official federal government communications is more than an historical fact. Bilingualism in Canada means that federal institutions provide their services and functions in two "official" languages. It reflects the fact that English and French explorers and settlers were the first Europeans to settle and develop what is now Canada, bringing with them what eventually became the two official languages. (In Part 2 Chapter 5, "Canadian Government: An Introduction," this subject is handled in more detail.)

Newcomers should not only know how to speak English and/or French, but should also know that both languages have equal status, and that the Canadian reality includes both these international languages. Opinion polls repeatedly show that a majority of Canadians see this as a national asset.

As Canada goes though a period of re-evaluation during which the Constitutional outcome is not clear, those who deal with newcomers have an obligation to be scrupulously fair. Most often, this will be characterized by refraining from editorializing with personal political opinions. It may also be necessary to point out to newcomers that rhetoric often outstrips reality, and that extreme positions gain the greatest media attention — particularly when a few people make racist slurs on those who speak the other Canadian language.

The way Canadians are dealing with their Constitutional dilemma can be confusing to some newcomers. On the one hand, some may feel that Canadians are not sufficiently committed and responsive to the situation; on the other, some may feel that the issues have been overblown. It is helpful to remark that many Canadians share one or other of these views.

Canada has never been static. At first, there was conflict among the European founding peoples, then the period of expansion westward, then the maturation of the political processes in the provinces — all in addition to the pressures of two world wars and many national and international crises. Canada continues to evolve and develop.

# Preface: An Overview of Immigration

## Core Concept

All newcomers enter Canada under the rules of the Canadian Immigration Act, which does not discriminate on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion or sex.

## Corollary

There are no "deals" when it comes to getting accepted into Canada.

*In simple terms, what are the different kinds of newcomers to Canada?*

Canada admits newcomers for three main reasons:

1. humanitarian reasons — that recognize the plight of refugees,
2. social reasons — that recognize the need for families to be reunited,
3. economic reasons — that allow people to contribute to Canada's economy and seek a better economic situation for themselves.

**1. Humanitarian reasons for admission**

Include people who are:

- *Refugees*, who can show that they comply *as individuals* with the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and its 1967 Protocol (specifically, people "... who because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on their race, nationality, religion or membership in a particular social group or political opinion is unable to live in their country of residence"); and

- *Designated Class members*, who are people in refugee-like situations in countries designated by the Canadian Immigration Act. In Canada, most people use the term "refugee" to mean either Convention Refugees or Designated Class members.

There are four types of refugees:

- *Government Assisted refugees*, who are helped by the Canadian government to settle in Canada. The Government of Canada provides financial support to these refugees for food, clothing, shelter and basic furniture, provided they do not have enough money to care for themselves. This help lasts for one year or until they find employment, whichever comes first. Refugees are expected to look for work and become self-supporting as soon as possible.
- *Privately Sponsored refugees*, who are helped by groups of not less than five individuals, church or religious groups or ethnic associations that have signed master sponsorship agreements. The sponsors provide financial support to refugees for food, clothing, shelter and basic furniture, provided they do not have enough money to meet their own needs. Refugees are expected to look for work and become self-supporting as soon as possible.
- *Family Sponsored refugees*, who are helped by their family members already in Canada. The family must supply food, clothing and shelter for up to ten years.
- *Independent refugees*, who look after themselves. They are not expected to need government assistance, and are expected to be self-supporting from the moment of arrival.

**2. Social reasons for admission**

Include:

- *Family Class* newcomers, who are connected by close kinship (spouse, dependent children, parents) to family members in Canada who sponsor the newcomer. The sponsor must provide adequate shelter, food, clothing and incidental living needs for up to ten years, and will support them in the event that they do not become self-supporting. This implies that the newcomer will not need financial assistance (welfare) from the government.

**3. Economic reasons for admission**

Include:

- *Independent Immigrants,* whose education, skills and background make it highly likely that they will immediately become self-sufficient contributors to Canada, in the case of self-employed people, creating jobs for themselves. Independent immigrants are selected by a point system that assesses their qualifications against Canadian needs, taking into account such matters as the ability to speak French or English, level of education, work experience and the demand in Canada for the applicant's skills. Independent immigrants are sub-classified into five largely self-evident groups:
    - *Independent workers,*
    - *Investors,*
    - *Entrepreneurs,*
    - *Self-employed,* and
    - *Assisted Relatives,* or independent immigrants who are assisted by their family members in Canada. Assisted

> relatives are assessed under the same point system as independent immigrants, but receive up to 15 points because their relative(s) in Canada will provide for their basic needs for five years if they do not become self-supporting. Assisted relatives can include independent brothers and sisters, independent children, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, grandsons and granddaughters.

Before people are admitted to Canada, they must pass health and security requirements. For example, they are checked for serious communicable diseases or criminal behaviour, either of which may be grounds for refusal.

Everyone is assessed according to the foregoing principles *before* they arrive in Canada and are granted the right of permanent residence.

There are also people who come to the Canadian border and claim to be refugees. Such people remain in Canada without status until the decision is made as to whether they are indeed Convention Refugees (that is, people who are in danger of death or persecution as individuals because of race, religion, nationality or membership in a particular social or political group). If they are found to be Convention Refugees, they may apply for permanent resident status. If not, they are required to leave Canada, either voluntarily or through deportation.

A newcomer may lose the right of residence in Canada:

- by leaving Canada with the intent of abandoning it as their place of permanent residence;

- by staying outside Canada for more than 183 days out of one year;
- by reason of a deportation order.

Deportation orders can only be issued after a hearing before a tribunal to decide whether there is a violation of a serious law. (Serious violations include: using a false passport or misrepresenting a material fact to gain admission to Canada, being convicted under the Criminal Code of Canada and sentenced to more than six months.) Such cases have included drug dealing, two convictions of shoplifting, drunk driving, child abuse, spouse abuse. The newcomer has the right of legal counsel at this hearing.

***Note* 1** The foregoing summary of aspects of the Immigration Act is partial, descriptive, and for general information only. Refer directly to the Act and Regulations for detailed information.

***Note* 2** Unlike many countries, Canada offers *no automatic entitlement to acceptance* based on marriage or blood relationship other than those that are noted above.

Canadian permanent residents and citizens have the right to sponsor immigration by their relatives, provided those relatives meet Canadian admission requirements with respect to health and character. Sponsorship is a legal contract between the Government of Canada and the sponsor whereby the sponsor takes the responsibility to ensure that the sponsored person will not need public assistance for the duration of the sponsorship period.

*Note 3* The term "family" is difficult to translate from language to language and society to society. In the context of Canadian immigration law, "family" refers to parents, spouse, siblings, children, grandparents *without* preference or distinction with respect to sex. Cousinship, which in many societies is considered a close relationship, is *not* so regarded in Canadian immigration law.

*Note 4* The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the protections offered by Canadian law apply to all persons who have been accepted into Canada.

*Note 5* Social benefits and settlement assistance are not automatic or a right. These programs have eligibility requirements, maximum allowable benefits. They are allocated strictly in accordance with needs. Social assistance and settlement assistance are not "free:" they are paid for by taxes.

## Canadian Government Programs for Newcomers

The Canadian government provides the following programs:

*Transportation Loans* to cover the cost of travel to Canada, or the cost of medical examinations to meet Canada's health requirements. This is a loan, from a fixed fund, not a grant or gift: newcomers must start to repay it as soon as they have a job. In addition to the legal responsibility to repay, there is a moral obligation in that failure to pay depletes the fixed fund, and may mean that other newcomers do not get help to come to Canada.

The *Adjustment Assistance Program* gives newcomers money to pay the cost of the basic needs of life — food, clothing, rent — **only** if they can prove that they cannot support themselves. Sponsored newcomers receive this kind of help from their relatives. Payments are made at Canada Employment Centres by the same official that helps newcomers find jobs. The rates of assistance are based on prevailing welfare rates for people in need.

*Language Training Programs* help newcomers learn English or French at government expense. Usually, there is a waiting list that may mean that newcomers must wait six to ten months. In addition, there are part-time, evening classes in English and French that are subsidized by government, but for which newcomers must sometimes pay a small fee. This language training is held at high schools and community colleges, immigrant serving organizations and public libraries. It is scheduled so that newcomers can both work and attend classes.

# PART ONE

# SURVIVAL NEEDS

## Shared Symbols of Canada 2

Winter is a shared experience of considerable symbolic importance to Canadians. The length and severity of winter in most of Canada contributes to what has been called Canadians' "nordicity": the quality of being northern that is shared by Canadians with Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, Finns, Icelanders and members of the northern Soviet Socialist Republics.

Canadians have a love-hate relationship with winter. On the one hand, there are those who fly to warmer climates in the south for all or part of the winter; on the other, there are those who can hardly wait for enough snow on which to ski. Canadians grumble about the winter in a peculiarly boastful fashion: though they may express dislike for the weather on a particular day, if you ask them about it, they will promptly tell you of some occasion when the weather was worse. A song popular in Quebec captures the essence of Canadians' identification with winter: "Mon pays c'est l'hiver" — my country is winter.

Canadian city-dwellers tend to treat winter mainly as an inconvenience. However, many communities both large and small have winter carnivals featuring a variety of sports and pastimes that include skating, skiing, hockey, curling, ice-dancing, snow and ice carving as well as parades and indoor dances, music and theatre. Many of these activities continue throughout the winter.

# Part 1 Chapter 1 **Geography**

***[Note: this chapter should be used in conjunction with the visual aids in the desk-top kit.]***

## Core Concept

In terms of area, Canada is the second largest country in the world.

Canadian distances constantly confuse both visitors and newcomers, because Canada is so much larger than the countries they know. Distance and space are important factors in Canadian culture, both causing and reinforcing regional differences.

## Something to look forward to ...

Canada's geography defies generalization. The country has innumerable lakes and rivers, as well as mountains, hills, plains, "badlands," tundra, forests. The variety in Canada's landscape is echoed by cultural differences among the people who live in each region, province, or community.

Canada borders on three oceans. Its largest neighbours are the two superpowers, the USA to the south and northwest (Alaska); and the USSR to the north beyond the North Pole. Two small islands, St. Pierre et Miquelon, less than 20 km from Newfoundland are French; and the coast of Greenland, a Danish possession, is only 30 km from Ellesmere Island, one of the larger Canadian Arctic Islands.

See also Part 2 Chapter 5, Canadian Government, An Introduction

## Scale

*Is your country within a single time zone?*

The world is divided into 24 time zones, each approximately one twenty-fourth of the distance around the world. Most countries are completely within one zone. Canada stretches into *six* time zones. Only the USSR has more than Canada.

> The six time zones of Canada mean that at any moment, there are six different correct times on the clocks of Canada, all but one zone an hour different from its neighbours. West of the Rockies is Pacific Time, Alberta operates on Mountain Time, then comes Central Time for Saskatchewan and Manitoba, then Eastern Time for most of Ontario and all of Quebec, Atlantic Time includes the Atlantic provinces, excluding the Island of Newfoundland, which has its own time zone, one HALF hour different from Atlantic Time.
>
> This unusual situation gives rise to jokes about Newfoundland being "half an hour later" from the point of view of the rest of Canada, or "half an hour earlier," from the point of view of Newfoundlanders.

*How long would it take you to drive a car from one side of your country to the other?*

The Trans Canada Highway is the longest trans-national highway in the world. It is approximately 7,300 kilometres from Victoria, British Columbia to St John's, Newfoundland, and includes two ferry services, the one to Vancouver Island, the other to Newfoundland. At a theoretical average speed of 100 km/hr, it would take three and a quarter days of continuous driving to go from coast to coast. In practice, it takes something more like a week of 12-hour days to make the trip by car, and more than five hours by plane.

The direct distance measured on the map from the Canada-Alaska border on the West Coast, to Cape Spear, Newfoundland on the East Coast is 5,514 km. The distance North to South from Cape Columbia on Ellesmere Island in the Arctic to Middle Island in Lake Erie is 4,634 km.

[Refer to desk-top kit: a map of Canada and other countries, providing comparison with the countries at issue.]

*How do you measure distance in your country?*

In Canada, distances are measured in kilometres (abbreviated "km"), sometimes referred to in conversation as "klicks." *NOTE that the USA uses miles to measure distance,* as Canada did until the mid-1970s.

*How long does it take to walk/drive/fly between the two largest cities in your country?*

**Comparable Distances**

| | |
|---|---|
| INTERNATIONAL AIR KMs | |
| Beijing to Montreal | 10,489 |
| Lima to Montreal | 6,388 |
| London to Washington | 5,911 |
| New Delhi to Rome | 5,928 |
| London, England to Toronto | 4,000 |
| AIR KMs IN CANADA | |
| St. John's to Vancouver | 5,004 |
| Halifax to Vancouver | 4,440 |
| Toronto to Whitehorse, Yukon | 4,064 |
| Toronto to Vancouver | 3,346 |

Source: Canadian World Almanac, 1990

[Refer to desk-top kit: use maps to show locations of above cities and relative distances.]

*How long does it take you to fly from your country to Canada?*

[Refer to desk-top kit: use map to show, for example, that the distance across Canada is greater than that across the Atlantic.]

*How many people live in your country?*
[Refer to desk-top kit: use map to show population.]

*Are there areas of your country in which there are a great many people concentrated together, and some where there are relatively few ?*

[Refer to desk-top kit: use map to show population distribution.]

*Does population distribution affect the nature of your country?*

Regional distribution of the population is one of the most significant aspects of the Canadian experience, affecting communications, transportation, politics, and the many regional identities within the larger Canadian identity. Canadians tend to think of themselves first in terms of their province or region: "I'm a British Columbian," or "I'm a Maritimer," or "I'm a Westerner."

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See also Regions and Provinces later in this chapter

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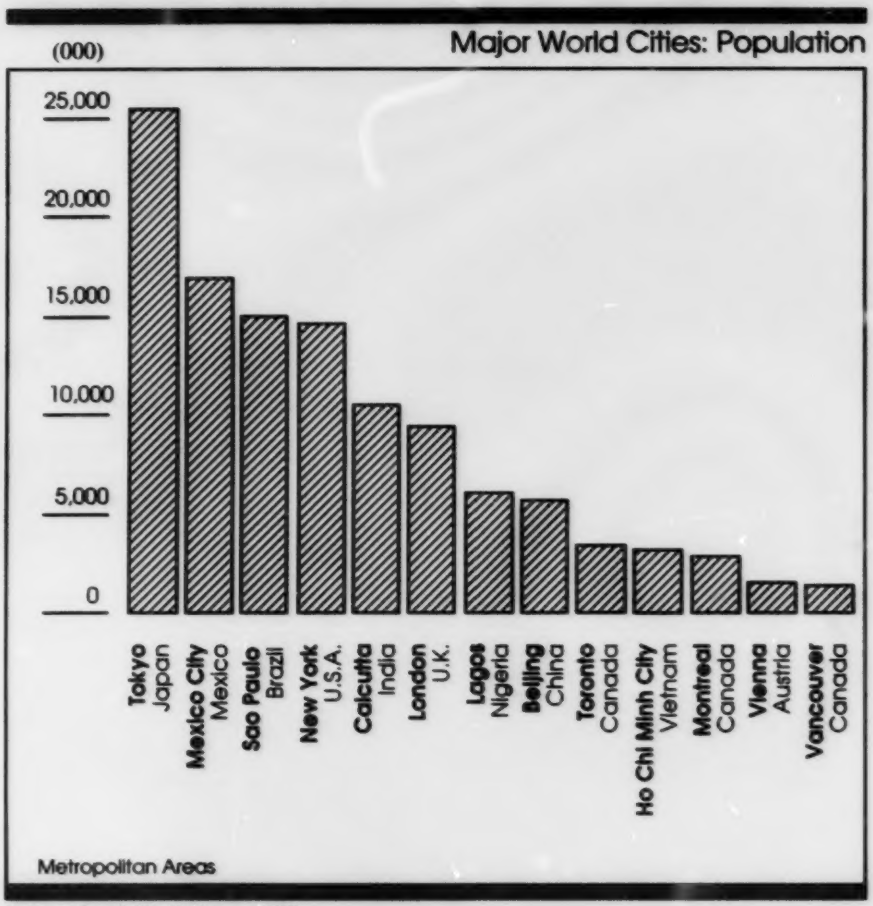
*How many people live in the largest city in your country?*

[Refer to desk-top kit: a graphic representation table of cities of the world in comparison to Canadian cities.]


Major World Cities: Population

Source: Canada World Almanac, 1990

*Are there heavily and lightly populated areas of your country?*

Most of Canada's population — well over 80% — is concentrated in cities along the southern edge of the country. Canada's northern regions are among the least densely populated areas in the entire world.
[Refer to desk-top kit: use map to show population centres.]

*What is the difference between life in cities and smaller centres in your country?*

As it is in most parts of the world, the pace of life in Canada's smaller cities and towns is not so fast, the sense of community is stronger, the personal touch more apparent. Generally speaking, Canada's smaller communities are welcoming towards newcomers, although at first there may be a period of mutual acclimatization for newcomers and established Canadians alike. On the one hand, some newcomers may welcome the opportunities offered by smaller communities to become part of mainstream Canada more quickly; on the other, some may want the sense of living in a larger city. Those who choose smaller centres are often surprised to be welcomed by newcomers like themselves. Statistically speaking, opportunities for employment in smaller centres may not be as great as in major centres, but if some care is taken in choosing a town or city which offers reasonable prospects, it is often possible for newcomers to find work just as quickly as in a major centre. Generally speaking, living costs are lower in smaller centres, particularly with respect to housing and transporation.

## Internal Geography

*What does your country look like? Mountains? (How high?) Rivers? (How long and how wide?) Plains? (How far across?) Seacoast? (How much? What Ocean?) Lakes? (How big?)*

Canada has all of these. You can probably find a part of Canada that looks like your country, at least during some season of the year.

[Refer to desk-top kit: use the base map of Canada to contrast with relevant countries to scale. Canadian maps include: physical geography; population density (social geography); provinces, towns, capitals, adjacent countries (political geography); climate.]

## Regions and Provinces of Canada

*Are there distinct regions and political divisions in your country ?*

Canada has distinct regions that are different in basic geography, and hence in terms of the occupations of those who live there. In addition to the regions, which are geographical in nature, Canada is divided into twelve political units, ten of which are called "provinces" and two "territories." The provinces (from west to east) are: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland. (A useful mnemonic for remembering the larger provinces in order from west to east is to pronounce their first letters: BASMOQ.) The territories, located in the north of Canada are the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

See also the section on Canadian History in Part 2 Chapter 5, and the section on Dining in Part 3 Chapter 6

The *Pacific Coast*. The coastal region of British Columbia, known in Canada as the West Coast, is where substantial mountains of more than 3,000 metres meet the sea. Offshore islands protect wide straits from the full force of the Pacific, and deep fjords indent the coastline. Fishing fleets catch salmon, herring, crab and shrimp on the same waters as were once fished exclusively by the West Coast tribes of First Peoples such as the Squamish, Tsimshian and Haida.

Vancouver and Victoria are the two largest cities of the West Coast. Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, is at the south end of the largest offshore island, Vancouver Island; Vancouver (the city) lies between the mountains where the Fraser River cuts a wide valley ending in a broad delta at the sea. The climate of the West Coast is pleasant all year around, although the winter is rainy along the seacoast. Snow rarely stays on the ground for more than a few hours at sea level in Vancouver and Victoria, although in the mountains that protect Vancouver it is possible to ski for more than four months of the year. Canadians from other parts of the country sometimes refer to those who live on the West Coast as inhabitants of "lotus land" — an accusation British Columbians do not always deny.

The prevailing winds of the West Coast are westerlies that draw up water in their long journey across the Pacific and then pour it down on the coastal mountains as rain or snow. In the valleys and mountain slopes grow the giant cedars, pines and redwoods of a temperate rain forest that includes the largest trees in Canada. Some of those that have been preserved from logging are more than ten metres around their base, and many are hundreds of years old.

The *Rocky Mountains*. The Rockies, as they are known in Canada, are limestone mountains forming the continental divide that separates the rivers flowing north to the Arctic Ocean, east towards the Atlantic and west to the Pacific. The watershed marks the border between the provinces of British Columbia and Alberta.

The Rockies are part of a continuous mountain chain that starts inside the Arctic Circle and extends south into the United States and on into Mexico. Peaks in the Rockies rise over 3,500 metres, some of them with glaciers of snow and ice that remain all year round. Below the mountains, particularly in the eastern foothills of Alberta and the Northwest Territories, lie gas and oil reserves that have not yet been fully explored, let alone tapped. Alberta, originally a ranching and farming province, has prospered from the twentieth century's need for this petrochemical energy.

In the heart of the Rockies are the oldest of Canada's national and provincial parks, where people hike, ski, ride and climb in country that human beings have trodden relatively lightly. In the high country, snow may fall any month of the year, and winter blizzards can cut the roads and railways where they climb through the mountain passes. Skiers rejoice in cross-country trails and downhill slopes where up to three metres of snow starts to fall in November and lasts until May. In the valleys, the months of June to September offer warm weather in which hikers wear shorts by day and carry jackets against the chill nights.

Wild animals in the National Parks are protected from hunters. Elk, deer, sheep, goats, coyotes, wolves, black, brown and grizzly bears are some of the larger animals that may be seen without great difficulty by hikers, sometimes even by those who drive through the famous passes through the Rockies: Rogers, Kicking Horse and Yellowhead. Literature given to everyone who enters the Rocky Mountain Parks reminds people that bears can be very dangerous animals, as can moose and elk, particularly in the mating season or when females are still nursing their young. The grandeur of the Rockies is overwhelming: the Canadian poet Earle Birney catches its essence in a poem about a man who lived beside "a mountain so huge that every time he looked at it, his mind slowed."

The *Prairies* are grasslands that begin on the eastern side of the Rockies where the forests of the foothills end. They lie in a broad swath across the centre of the continent south of the northern forests and west of the Canadian Shield. The Prairies extend south into the midwest of the USA, include much of Alberta, and most of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Winters on the Prairies are long, cold, and windy. Compared to the Rockies or the Canadian Shield, relatively little snow falls. Spring brings not only the rebirth of the land, but also the return of millions of wild birds that migrate north each year to their breeding grounds.

The Prairies are often described as flat and treeless, but in actual fact those who live there know that they are gently rolling plains divided into a checkerboard of farms. Original, uncultivated prairie is almost entirely gone today, along with the buffalo herds hunted by the Plains Indians. European traders massacred the buffalo, European settlers plowed the land, and the result is one of the largest grain-growing areas in the world. Wheat alone contributes $2.5 billion — about 1% — to Canada's Gross National Product. The almost constant winds of summer roll the crops like waves on the sea, and below the changing cloudscapes the land alters its shade and colour hour by hour.

The *North* is by far the largest region of Canada. It includes the Arctic Islands, The Yukon and the Northwest Territories. The Inuit and Dene people lived there long before the European explorers first arrived in North America. The history of the North is filled with tragic stories of Europeans looking in vain for a North West Passage that would allow them to sail to the Pacific — a feat not achieved until 1903, when Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian explorer, took three years to sail from Atlantic to Pacific via the elusive northern route. It was not until 1944 that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police ship the *St. Roch* completed the crossing from the Atlantic to Pacific Oceans through the Arctic islands in one season.

Winter comes early and leaves late in the North. Daylight hours diminish until midwinter, and darkness lasts for days before the sun returns briefly at the horizon. However, at midsummer, the sun never sets, and the land is alive with one of the world's last and largest natural habitats for caribou and musk ox on land, polar bear, seal, walrus and whales in and on the water, and hundreds of species of birds in the air. The beauty of the North is unique: those who fall to its austere charm would live nowhere else.

The Inuit have lived in harmony with the awesome powers of the North for hundreds of years. They prefer their own name for themselves to "Eskimo," which means "eaters of raw meat," and was a Cree Indian insult that was adopted by the first Europeans. In recent years, the Inuit have negotiated greater control of their lands from the Government of Canada, as well as the mineral and energy resources they contain.

The *Canadian Shield* extends eastwards from the edge of the Prairies, stretches north to Hudson's Bay, and encircles the northern part of the Great Lakes. The east of Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec are the provinces that share this huge region that is further subdivided into the low granite mountains of the Gatineau Hills, Laurentian Mountains and Lowlands, the broad river valleys of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers, and the fresh-water Great Lakes.

Geologically speaking, the Canadian Shield includes some of the oldest exposed rock anywhere in the world. Far in the distant past, long before man, successive periods of glaciation ground down the granite of the Canadian Shield under more than a kilometre of ice and snow. Millions of years later, the Indians of many different tribes lived beside the vast rivers and lakes, hunting and trapping the abundant wildlife of the forests that covered all but a few granite cliffs and hilltops.

The Canadian Shield is rich in history. It was here that the English and French explorers, adventurers and later settlers came and discovered what they regarded as a new land. The winters were harsh by European standards, but most of the crops familiar to them could be grown in the long summers that warmed the fertile river valleys. They cleared the forest and used the wood first to build their homes and then as the basis of the country's economy. As an exportable commodity, wood in the form of lumber and forest products such as pulp and paper remains one of Canada's primary resources.

To the north, the geological processes that formed the Canadian Shield left behind them a wealth of minerals including gold, silver, copper, nickel and uranium. Mining communities such as Sudbury and Timmins extract and refine metals that are another of Canada's most important exports.

The southern edge of the Canadian Shield is Canada's industrial heartland. It contains the two largest cities in Canada: Toronto, the capital of Ontario, and Montreal, the largest city in Quebec. The region is the home of a variety of industries, from aerospace and communications in these two major cities, to automobiles at Oshawa and steel at Hamilton.

The Canadian Shield contains the largest concentration of fresh water in the world. The Great Lakes, which are essentially small fresh-water seas, account for a great part of the water, but there are also innumerable smaller lakes, rivers and streams. Waterfalls that astounded first the Indians and later the Europeans have been harnessed for the hydro-electric energy that powers the industries of Canada's most populous region.

The *Atlantic Region* is the usual name for the east coast region, stretching from the border with the USA to the northernmost tip of Labrador. Historically, the four Atlantic coast provinces were once British colonies: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland (which now includes the mainland part of this province, called Labrador). The sea is never far away in the Atlantic Region. Nations and tribes of the First Peoples such as the Micmac made their homes close to tidewater so that they could benefit both from the animals of the forests and the fish of the seas. Vikings first sailed their longships to the Atlantic Region late in the 10th century, but their settlements eventually failed. Centuries passed, and it was not until 1604 that Europeans spent their first winter at Annapolis Royal in Nova Scotia.

The granite of the low mountains of the Atlantic Region reminded Europeans of their homelands in the northern countries of Europe, particularly Scotland, for which Nova Scotia is named. The trees of the forests provided wood for constructing the ships needed by Britain to carry trade and to engage in war. Once land had been cleared, valleys such as the Saint John river in New Brunswick, the Annapolis-Cornwallis rivers of Nova Scotia and the winding streams of Prince Edward Island all offered a good living for farmers.

The East Coast itself is indented with bays, peninsulas, islands, and promontories that all offer ships good protection from the Atlantic storms. As a result, the Atlantic Provinces were settled in relatively small towns and villages along the coastline, where fishing and shipbuilding became primary industries. In the days of sail, the ports of Halifax and Saint John had the busiest shipyards in the world. More recently, during the First and Second World Wars, Halifax in particular became the port through which a river of ships, men, machines and materiel flowed across the Atlantic to the Allied cause.

Gold, silver, coal, lead, tin, and other minerals are mined in the Atlantic Region, and both oil and gas have been found offshore under the relatively shallow seas known to fishermen for four centuries as "The Grand Banks."

## Natural Resources

*What are the major natural resources of your country?*

Canada's natural resources are unusually varied and extensive.

- FOREST INDUSTRIES are a major source of employment, including not only the people who cut down trees but also those who make a wide variety of forest products. Because almost half (44%) of Canada is forested, it is the world leader in forest product exports, which account for approximately one fifth of the world total.

- MINING Canada leads the world in value of mineral exports. Canada is first in the world for uranium, nickel and zinc; second for asbestos, potash, sulphur and gypsum; third for gold, aluminum and platinum, fourth for molybdenum, copper, cadmium and lead; and fifth for silver.

- ENERGY In Canada, energy is produced from a variety of sources including hydroelectric power from water, as well as coal, oil, natural gas and nuclear-powered generating stations.

- AGRICULTURE Approximately three out of every hundred Canadian workers are farmers. Canada grows a wide variety of products, both for local consumption (poultry, vegetables, pigs) and for export (grain from the prairies). Hogs, chickens, dairy and beef cattle are raised in the southern latitudes of Canada.

- FISHING Fishing is a vital industry to all three ocean coastlines. By tradition, the most important fish on the east coast is cod, and on the west coast is salmon, although today a variety of species are caught and processed. Whereas the Atlantic and Pacific fisheries produce for both internal and export trade, the Arctic Ocean fishery is largely for local consumption.

- TOURISM Tourism uses the land itself and the people who live on it as a natural resource that cannot be depleted. Tourism attracts visitors from abroad who spend about $4 billion annually in Canada.

[Refer to desk-top kit: use map to locate where these activities are concentrated.]

## Adjacent Countries

*What countries are adjacent to your country?*

To the south, Canada shares the longest undefended border in the world with the United States of America. To the north, the USSR and Canada are separated by the mostly frozen Arctic Ocean. Greenland, a possession of

Denmark, is across the Davis Strait from Canada's Arctic Islands, and St. Pierre and Miquelon are two French islands less than 20 km from Newfoundland.

[Refer to desk-top kit: map — Canada, political, showing adjacent countries.]

*What makes your country different from its neighbouring countries?*

Canada is distinct from the USA in terms of objective measurements such as physical size (Canada is much bigger), population (Canada has almost precisely ten times fewer people) and economics (Canada has a GDP roughly ten times smaller). There are also differences in terms of history and all the component elements of culture that distinguish Canadians from people who live in the USA. These differences may seem subtle at first, but they are important to most Canadians.

Beside the many cultural matters that are the subject of this *Source Book*, there are two immediately observable differences between Canada and the USA that are the result of government policy. One is Canada's two official languages, English and French; and the other is Canada's policy of multiculturalism that encourages people to retain their national or ethnic heritage in addition to being Canadian.

## Concepts that are easily misunderstood

Linguistically, "bigger" and "better" are related concepts in most languages, and are therefore easily confused. When dealing with more than one language and culture in the same classroom or group, the problem becomes more acute. The sensitive teacher or helper will guard against the suggestion that bigger is better when talking about the size and scale of Canada, so that students do not feel that their country of origin is being denigrated. Once again, an objective viewpoint is preferable to a corrective lecture. Having discovered to their alarm that Canada is many times larger than their country, newcomers can be gratified to learn that most of our cities have smaller populations than their own. The two items of information together balance each other emotionally, and can be grasped meaningfully at a conceptual level.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Newcomers accustomed to maps of their own countries forget to examine the *scale* of maps of all or part of Canada. They therefore assume that "about three to five inches" on the map represent a distance that can be comfortably driven in half a day. If the map in question is of Canada — or even one of the larger provinces — the resultant mistake can be both embarrassing and costly.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Conversationally explore different conceptions of "crowded," "urban," "city," by focusing on psychological concepts of space and population (as opposed to using numbers of the kind found in an atlas). ie: How many people are in an average school or high school class? — In Canada, between 20 and 30. How often do you bump into or press against someone as a result of being in a crowded place? — In Canada, seldom, with the possible exception of rush hour elevators, buses, subways and some airports in large urban areas.

- Role-play exercise: Buy/sell an airline/bus/train ticket to somewhere in Canada. What should emerge is the distance, mode of transportation, degree of difficulty, and expense involved in travelling, as well as language usage and terminology.

- Information gap exercise-game. Give one person/group a map of Canada featuring transportation by air, rail and road, the other person/group an identical map featuring cities, provinces and distances. Without showing each other the maps, have the two people/groups pool their information by each discovering in English what information the other has. Language skills include: asking questions, making corrections, interrupting, describing.

- If it is possible, show film or video about Canada. Have students brainstorm about the vocabulary of the film, with the teacher providing essential information and clarification. Ask questions such as "Which part of Canada did you like best?" "Where could you imagine yourself living?" "Where would you most like to visit ?"

- Discuss alternate destinations in Canada other than the major cities of Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. Correct the impression that nothing happens outside these cities, and point out that climate and weather need not be major worries if choosing to live further north. [Disussion leaders may have to inspect their own preconceptions about life in different parts of Canada, and strive to be objective.]

# Part 1 Chapter 2 **Weather and Climate**

## Core Concept

No matter where you live in Canada, the weather can be extreme. Although in summer the weather in parts of southern Canada can be as hot as any tropical country, in the winter it is possible to freeze to death unless you have appropriate clothing, training and experience.

## Something to look forward to ...

The seasonal variations in climate have much to do with the Canadian experience, and contribute to Canada's culture. The weather offers an endless source of conversational material.

## How hot and how cold?

In the summer months of June, July and August the temperature in Canada is often as high as in any tropical country. Most city office buildings are equipped with air conditioning.

During the winter months of December, January, February and March, the temperature in Canada remains below freezing most of the time, with the exception of the southern portions of the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. In most of Canada's inland southern cities, exposed flesh will freeze in less than five minutes on very cold January nights and days. Snow usually lies on the ground in the south of Canada from late December to mid March, longer in the north.

Virtually all homes and offices are equipped with central heating.

*How do you measure temperature in your country?*

Officially, Canada uses the Celsius (Centigrade) thermometer to measure temperature, and has done so since the mid-70s. *This is unlike the USA, which uses the Farenheit scale.* The scale of the Celsius thermometer places boiling water at 100° and freezing water at 0°. The Farenheit thermometer places boiling water at 212° and freezing water at 32°. In deference to American visitors and many older people in Canada who have not made the adjustment to the Celsius scale, some public radio and television stations give both measurements when reporting the weather. Some older houses still have thermostats and thermometers measuring only in Farenheit degrees.

*Is the climate the same throughout your country? In the mountains? In the North?*

In Canada in the winter, it usually gets much colder the further north you go, or the higher you climb into the mountains in the west and northwest. Snowfall and rainfall, however, vary with proximity to the water of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans and the Great Lakes.

*How many seasons do you have in your country?*

Most of Canada has four distinct seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. The changes from season to season are not so clear north of the Arctic Circle.

Spring in most of Canada is a rainy season when temperatures grow progressively warmer day by day, even though the nights remain cool. The balance between rain and sun is suitable for the growth of plants. In many parts of Canada, spring is also the season for biting insects such as the mosquito and the black fly, which, although they do *not* carry disease, can make rural and wooded areas unpleasant for recreation or outside work.

In southern Canada, spring generally begins as early as March, when the first flowers begin to bloom, but the new leaves do not return to the trees until April or May in most southern Canadian cities (excepting southern coastal British Columbia, which has the shortest, mildest winter in Canada).

Canadians traditionally think of summer as being bounded by two "long" (three-day) weekends: July 1, which is Canada Day, and September 1, which is Labour Day. In actual fact, the summer season in the south of Canada extends from late May through to mid-September, and is characterized by hot, dry, settled weather interspersed with summer rainstorms.

The autumn or "fall" in Canada begins at about the time of the first frost, when the shortening days and lower light levels cause the leaves of deciduous trees first to change colour and then to drop off the trees. The weather tends to be rainy and changeable, with snow becoming more and more frequent in most regions during November.

Winter comes early to the North and high country such as the Rockies. Snow falls on the peaks as early as August, and moves down into all but the southern valleys by November . Contrary to most expectations, the snowiest areas of Canada are *not* north of the Arctic Circle but rather on the western slopes of the Rockies, and east of the Great Lakes. The weather starts to get cold as early as September in most of Canada. Northerners expect "freeze-up" in October or November, when the lakes and rivers freeze for the winter, making travel by land easier than in the summer — providing one does not encounter storms. Winter weather involving snow and freezing temperatures may occur as early as October in the south of Canada, but in general, snow does not lie on the ground for more than a few hours until late December.

Accordingly, southern Canadians think of winter as starting in early December and lasting through to March. In most parts of southern Canada one should expect snow to lie on the ground at least intermittently between late December and early March, much longer north of the more populous areas, on high ground and in some northern regions. Especially in early and late winter, cold rain often falls as well as snow. Snow itself falls in many forms: wet and heavy, cold and fine, blown by winds into blizzards or dusting the ground in snow showers. There is an old and remarkably accurate saying, "Big snow, small snow; small snow, big snow." This means that when big flakes fall, snow does not often pile high on the ground or last for long; whereas when the snow falls in fine, small crystals, it tends to go on falling for a long time, piling up on the ground in drifts.

## Effects of weather on work and leisure

*How do the seasons of the year affect work in your country?*

Canada's distinct four seasons have considerable effect on patterns of work. The seasonal cycle interrupts primary industries such as farming, fishery and forestry for the winter period of at least three months. Similarly, the construction industry slows down in the winter months, and intensifies in the summer. Nonetheless, Canadians have learned to cope with transportation in the winter, and delays are relatively minor when one considers the difficulties imposed by snowstorms, ice and cold.

*What seasonal sports and pastimes take place in your country?*

Canada's national sport is hockey. Although it is now usually played on artificial indoor ice, it originated as a sport played on outdoor rinks. Cross-country and downhill skiing are very popular in Canada, particularly in the hills of Ontario and Quebec, and in the mountains of Alberta and British Columbia. Summer outdoor sports and pastimes include swimming, canoeing, bicycling, hiking and games such as football, baseball, tennis and soccer.

The seasons in Canada affect wildlife, and consequently sporting activities such as fishing and hunting.Each province requires a licence to hunt or fish, and laws limit how many and what fish or animals may be taken. Hunting is prohibited in all federal and most provincial parks.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Canadian weather forecasts on radio and TV frequently cause problems for newcomers by the use of terms such as "a nice day," "a sunny day," or "a warm day" when talking about weather in the winter. The unspoken words "...for a winter day" are understood by Canadians, but not always by newcomers. Sometimes they then fail to realize the context of the season, and as a result dress inadequately.

See the relevant anecdote in the Introduction

## Discussion Suggestions

- Discuss the psychological realities of heat and cold (as opposed to degrees on a thermometre). Distinguish between pleasant cold, for example, ice cubes in drinks; and dangerous cold, for example, standing too long waiting for a bus on a cold winter's day. Introduce the idea of hypothermia: the gradual, imperceptible reduction of core body heat until the person first becomes dazed, then sleepy, and may die if not revived. Have students talk about the the hottest and coldest days they have ever experienced.

- Interpreting Canadian weather forecasts: read weather forecasts out loud and invite students (1) to describe the weather that they think is being forecast, and (2) how they would prepare for what will happen. Introduce colloquial weather vocabulary such as "Raining cats and dogs," "What a gorgeous day!" Distinguish weather-talk from the Canadian polite expression, "Have a nice day!"

- Role play: Planning a family outing in Canada. Take into account the seasons and their consequences, distances, pastimes and amusements. Correct misperceptions that offer a "Hollywood" view of Canada in terms of cowboys and Indians, etc.

- Bring in real objects such as a parka, a toque, gloves, mitts, bathing suit, baseball cap, etc., and have the students suggest what they are and when they might be worn.

- Conduct a game in which the teacher gives groups of three or four people a destination in Canada and a time of year. Each group must itemize the contents of the suitcase they would pack, and then defend their choices to the rest of the class.

- Discuss the effects of weather on people. Encourage students to talk about how they feel in different weather, and how they would expect people from other cultures to be affected.

# Part 1 Chapter 3 **Food**

## Core Concept

Canadians have no single set of food conventions. When and what Canadians eat is strongly influenced by climate, season, their ethnic origin, economic situation, or personal preferences. Jobs and family responsibilities affect the timing of meals, and cultural traditions from many parts of the world are all important influences on diet.

## Something to look forward to...

The different regions of Canada have characteristic traditional foods of which they are proud. Sometimes these are seasonal delicacies served on special occasions, some of them are everyday fare.

See the section on Dining in Part 3 Chapter 6

## Expectations about Canadian food customs

*When, where and how often do you eat each day?*

Many Canadians have three meals each day: a small breakfast in the early morning, before leaving home, a relatively light mid-day meal called "lunch," and a main meal called "dinner" or "supper" in the evening. Many rural families have their main meal at mid-day.

Most Canadians take what is known as a "coffee break" of fifteen minutes at mid-morning and mid-afternoon, during which they drink coffee or tea, fruit juice or soft drinks.

Canadian families with children tend to call their evening meal "supper" and have it between 5 and 7 p.m. Families without children, single people and city-dwellers tend to eat between 7 and 9 p.m., and call the meal "dinner."

*What would you normally eat at these meals?*

Canadians eat many different foods. However, it is possible to form some reasonable expectations based on the menus of most non-specialized restaurants across Canada.

Many Canadians eat a breakfast consisting of some form of cereal, toasted bread with honey, jam or marmalade, accompanied by beverages such as fruit juice, milk, coffee or tea. They frequently eat a salad, or a sandwich, or soup, or a small serving of meat or fish at lunch, again with coffee, tea or milk. People working outdoors usually carry their lunches with them and eat them where they are working. Many office workers eat their lunch at work, often buying coffee, tea, milk or juice to accompany the sandwich they have brought with them. If you are an office worker, taking your lunch to work is called "brown bagging" in much of Canada.

The typical Canadian evening meal usually consists of meat or fish and a vegetable, plus potatoes or rice or pasta, which could be prepared in any number of different national, regional or ethnic styles. The meal is generally accompanied by the same beverages as for breakfast and lunch, although some families might serve wine.

The Canada Food Guide is a publication of the federal Department of Health and Welfare that helps Canadians choose balanced, nourishing food. The booklet is used extensively in schools, and is generally obtainable from a wide variety of government service agencies including medical clinics, government information services, and many hospitals. The latest edition of the Canada Food Guide suggests correspondences between foods with similar nutritional values from different parts of the world, including the many varieties of bread, dairy and vegetable products of which some Canadians have only become aware in recent decades. This makes the Guide not only more accessible to newcomers, but also more valuable to established Canadians.

*When can you be sure that water is safe to drink in your country?*

In any Canadian city or town, the water piped into a house, apartment or public building is safe to drink. Increasingly, Canadians are buying and consuming bottled water because they dislike the taste of water that has been chlorinated to prevent waterborne infections.

> *Particularly in urban areas, do not drink from rivers, lakes and streams, or take water from them for cooking, drinking or eating.*

Although the water in most northern lakes, streams and rivers is safe to drink, many newcomers are likely to be closer to sources of pollution because they are living in urban areas. The dangers of drinking unpurified water are of two kinds: micro-organisms that can cause infection, or chemical poisons. In Canada, the infections that might be caught from water could cause diarrhea that can be debilitating but not fatal. Most chemical pollutants (arsenic, mercury, man-made chemicals such as PCBs ([PolyChlorinated Biphenols] etc.) have serious long-term effects. Even though these risks are low, prudence and caution dictate that one does not take any chances with unpurified water.

*What would you normally drink during the day?*

Canadians usually drink coffee or tea with or at the end of their meals. Most children and a great many adults consume at least a pint (500 ml) of milk each day. Many Canadians are unaware that for many non-northern people, lactose tolerance ceases by adulthood, which means that they cannot digest milk. Many newcomers are amazed to see adults drinking milk, which is an unacceptable drink in many countries of the world. Coffee is available in most workplaces, as are tea and soft drinks. Beer is the most popular alcoholic drink in terms of total volume consumed, and in the past two decades, wine has increasingly been consumed in place of distilled liquors.

Canadian customs with respect to alcohol have changed drastically in the past twenty years. Liquor licencing is a provincial matter, (see Part 1, Chapter 1 for definition of provinces) and liquor licensing laws have been and continue to be modified. This means that licenced premises and licencing hours are somewhat different from province to province. Alcoholic beverages are sold only in specifically licenced stores, and you must be 18 or 19 years old (depending on the province) to purchase alcohol in any form.

A century ago, the consumption of distilled liquor in Canada posed a major social problem. Drunkenness was routine, and there were serious social and economic consequences. During the last decades of the 19th and the early decades of the 20th centuries, parts of Canada attempted varying degrees of prohibition. The second half of the 20th century has seen a progressive liberalization of laws respecting alcohol, and simultaneously, a more responsible attitude towards its use.

In part, these changes have been influenced by newcomers whose cultural traditions were different from the Canadian social reformers of the nineteenth century. The changes are a consequence of the increased permissiveness of modern European and North American society. They also reflect the realization that educating and persuading society as a whole is more effective than repressing many and punishing the few who are caught.

Provincial laws as well as social customs prohibit the consumption of wine, beer or distilled liquor on the job, while driving, as well as casually on the street, in parks, or other public places — unless, of course, they are sidewalk restaurants or other places licenced to sell alcoholic beverages.

In recent years, most Canadians have become convinced that it is both unwise and immoral to drink alcohol and subsequently drive a car. They therefore support the law that makes it illegal to drive with a blood alcohol level of .08 — about two drinks consumed in less than two hours.

*What differences would you expect among people's eating habits in your country?*

Because Canadians come from many ethnic origins, they have learned to enjoy a wide variety of different national cuisines. This is particularly true of cities, where there are many ethnic restaurants and specialty grocery stores.

*What would you choose not to eat?*

In addition to the dietary prohibitions associated with specific religions — which are regarded by Canadians as a private matter — most Canadians would be offended by being offered horse meat or dog meat. Canadians are becoming more adventurous eaters than they were a generation or so ago. City-dwellers in particular are willing to try different dishes in the national cuisines of many countries. An increasing number of health-conscious Canadians are becoming vegetarians by choice. Canada's Food Guide published by the federal Department of Health and Welfare is a standard reference for eating a balanced diet that also indicates how high-protein vegetables such as beans and lentils can replace more expensive meat.

*What social customs accompany food and drink in your country?*

Canadians use a great number of brief national toasts such as "Cheers!" or "À votre santé!" when raising the first glass between friends or family. Many religious families say a brief prayer, called "grace", before meals when at home, although most are reticent about doing so in public. Generally speaking, the mid-day meal (and sometimes breakfast) can be an occasion to do business, but the evening meal is a time for social interaction and mutual enjoyment, particularly within the family or among close friends.

*Who serves food to whom and how in your country?*

Many Canadian families sit together around a table to eat their evening meal at home, and help each other with the serving of food and drink without great regard to sex or age. It is usual to wait until everyone is served before beginning to eat.

In restaurants, Canadians adopt a formalized, impersonal friendliness toward restaurant employees. Women are usually served first. It is considered rude to summon a waiter or waitress by snapping one's fingers. Eye contact, and/or a small wave is preferred. In addition to a tip of from 10% to 15%, a brief "thank you" is the customary farewell to a waiter or waitress.

*Where and how would people entertain their relatives in your country?*

Canadians entertain their relatives and close friends either at home or at a restaurant, according to their personal preferences. The entertaining of business acquaintances is most likely to be done at a restaurant.

*At social gatherings, what food or drink is served and how?*

As with most social customs throughout the world, there is endless debate about the finer points of social etiquette with respect to food and drink.

In general, Canadians visit each other only by invitation or arrangement, which may be formally or informally offered, but usually stipulates a time.

Invitations are usually extended "for dinner" or "for lunch" if a meal is being offered; otherwise, it is common for the host or hostess to offer something to drink (tea, coffee, a soft drink, or alcohol in some form) as well as light snacks (finger-foods). An invitation "for the evening" will often end with the serving of light, sweet food, called "dessert."

Because the details of Canadian customs vary, casual or informal invitations can be confusing. Since it is not always clear whether they are being invited for a meal, a snack or merely drinks and conversation, guests often ask whether they can bring some item of food or drink. From the answer it is usually possible to deduce the details of the invitation. Very few people will be offended by such a question, unless of course the occasion is formal, such as a wedding.

*What arrangements do people make about small children when entertaining in your country?*

Generally speaking, unless small children are specifically invited — as in the case of "whole-family functions" such as are often held at Christmas — most invitations are usually directed only to adults.

This means that when parents leave home for a social engagement, some responsible person must be left in charge of small children. "Baby-sitting" is more than a social custom. It is the law that children under 12 may not be left alone in the home. Canadians feel strongly about this custom and law, and believe that it is their responsibility as a public-spirited person to report anyone who leaves small children alone.

*How would you prepare meals in your country?*

Canadian families are so diverse in their origins and tastes that it is impossible to generalize meaningfully.

In recent decades, Canadians have begun to cook both more and less: more, in that they are trying different recipes from many origins; and less, in that they are making more and more use of prepared foods, fast-food or take-out restaurants and other shortcuts involving convenience foods.

Food preparation is no longer seen as exclusively men's or women's work, largely because of the sharing of household responsibilities that takes place when both partners hold jobs. This sharing of responsibilities between husbands and wives is as yet only a trend in Canada. Although more people than ever before strive for equality between the sexes in these and other matters, the practice is far from universal.

As a result of single-parent and double-income families, children are increasingly involved in food preparation. Where this is a learning experience that prepares children for adult responsibilities, it is to be admired. However, where children under 12 years are left alone to fend for themselves, it is neither respected nor encouraged.

*In your country, what do people use to prepare food?*

A basic Canadian kitchen includes an electric or gas stove with four top elements and an oven, a refrigerator with a freezer compartment, a sink with hot and cold running water, and storage space for dried food, utensils and dishes.

In addition to these basics, many people also have an automatic dishwashing machine, known as a "dishwasher," a large freezer separate from the refrigerator, a microwave oven, an electric kettle, a toaster, a blender, a mixer or a food processor as well as a wide variety of other "gadgets" designed to make food preparation easier.

Almost every household or kitchen device comes from the manufacturer with a manual that explains in English and French how it is used. These directions for use are either expressed symbolically, or in many languages, or both. However, because most stoves, refrigerators, hot water heaters, etc., have similar controls, and are usually supplied when renting or buying an apartment or house, newcomers should not expect to find the manuals in the apartment or home that they rent. Accordingly, they should seek advice from someone used to running any such equipment.

> *No one — least of all children — should attempt to find out how to use stoves, microwave ovens, vacuum cleaners, blenders, etc., by the trial -and-error method. Newcomers have been severely injured, and much expensive damage has been caused by trying to operate household equipment without a full understanding of how it is used.*

Most houses or apartments in Canada are rented with at least a stove, refrigerator and hot water heater supplied. In the case of more expensive rental properties, a washer and dryer and often a dishwasher will be included. In large apartment buildings, coin-operated washing machines and dryers are supplied for the common use of all tenants. These appliances are usually located in a basement room, or sometimes in a special room on each floor.

*How would you store food in your country?*

Perishable foods (ie: meat, dairy products, vegetables, etc.) are usually stored in a refrigerator; non-perishables (ie: canned foods, flour, salt dried beans, peas, etc.) are stored in containers, in cupboards. Refrigeration of products such as meat, fish, milk, butter and eggs extends their safe consumption period from a few hours to several days. Frozen foods should be kept in the freezer section of the refrigerator, and defrosted only as they are needed. Cooked foods can be frozen and kept safely for weeks in the freezing compartment of a refrigerator, again PROVIDED they are not thawed and re-frozen.

Infant foods, particularly milk and mixed formula, are particularly subject to contamination by airborne bacteria, *even in the cleanest of homes*. For this reason, baby bottles of milk or formula should be prepared and refrigerated promptly, removed from the refrigerator only for consumption, and never re-cooled and re-heated several times.

Food in refrigerators and cupboards alike should be in sealed containers to prevent exchange of flavours and contamination by bacteria.

*How would you dispose of food waste and other garbage in your country?*

In all urban and most rural areas, there is a weekly collection of waste, usually called "trash" or "garbage." This is the responsibility of the local government (city, town, village, municipality). On a designated day each week, food waste and other trash and unwanted articles, known collectively as garbage, are placed by the roadside for collection. Garbage is stored during the rest of the week in large plastic bags (or in "garbage cans" made of metal or plastic, lined with plastic bags). In some large apartment buildings, there is a chute on each floor in which garbage can be deposited. In some cities, people are encouraged to separate garbage into biodegradable food waste, re-cyclables such as paper, tin, glass and aluminum, and general garbage. A "Blue Box" is a receptacle for re-cyclable materials that is put out at the same time as the other garbage, but which is collected separately. As yet, the Blue Box program only exists in a few major cities and towns in Canada. An increasing number of people with houses and gardens are composting biodegradable food waste for fertilizer to be used in gardening.

*Do people raise livestock (ie: food animals) in or near their homes in your country?*

In Canadian cities and towns, it is illegal to raise animals such as rabbits, chickens, etc., for food, in or near your home. Similarly, the semi-wild animals such as squirrels, pigeons, etc., that live in cities and towns are not hunted or eaten. Public health is the reason for these laws and customs. Raising food animals creates waste that cannot be accommodated by municipal disposal systems. Urban semi-wild animals and birds are often adversely affected by urban pollution and the non-natural foods they scavenge. Eating them could be dangerous.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Three common misunderstandings are:

- that household equipment can be operated without training or instructions,
- that it is economical and desirable to shop for food on a daily basis,
- that animals can be raised for food at home.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about food and its preparation.

- Role play waiter/waitress and customer ordering a meal in a Canadian restaurant.

- Use magazines, newspapers, recipe books, menus, take-out order forms etc., to give an idea of food in Canada, particularly selecting those that offer Canada's multicultural heritage in foods, as well as when the different foods are served (holidays, celebrations).

- Using pictures, or better still, the food itself, introduce the names for different kinds of food.

- Introduce the concept of major food groups (vegetables, cereals, meat, dairy products, etc.) within the students' *own* diets, and then have them use the Canada Food Guide to discover Canadian substitutes.

- Bring pictures of kitchen equipment, or, better still, real objects (for example: spatula, toaster, double-boiler, etc.) and invite the participants to identify them and tell what they are used for.

# Part 1 Chapter 4 **Clothing**

## Core Concept

The most important influence on Canadian clothing is the cycle of the seasons. Canadian winter clothing is primarily designed to cope with severe cold; whereas Canadian summer clothing reflects the wide variety in the ethnic origins of Canadians. In terms of style, what Canadians wear is generally at the more conservative end of the spectrum of modern western international conventions that can be seen in mainstream film, video, magazines and newspapers.

Although status can be read from clothing at the office and on formal occasions, leisure wear in Canada provides little guide to who or what a person is and does.

Most Canadians are tolerant of variations in clothing styles, whether they are based on individual preference, religious decree or national origin. However, intolerant people do exist; and though they are a minority, such people are often outspoken, and can cause embarassment both to newcomers and other Canadians.

## Something to look forward to ...

Although Canada has no "national dress," it does have regional clothing conventions about costumes for special occasions.

For example, it is not unusual in Nova Scotia for men and women to wear "the kilt" which is traditional highland Scottish clothing on special occasions such as weddings. Albertans like to remember the cattle-ranching origins of their province at some social events by "dressing western" — jeans, flared skirts, cowboy boots, stetson hats and open-necked shirts with bright neckcloths. During Winter Carnival in Quebec City, the traditions of the early French pioneers, called Coureurs de bois, are recalled by wearing long, hand-woven belts and bright red stocking caps.

## Effects of climate on clothing

*What do you wear to keep warm in your country?*

In the winter, Canadians wear shoes or boots, a thick, windproof topcoat, some form of hood or hat that covers the ears, a scarf around the neck (and in bitter cold across the face), gloves, and warm undergarments. Such clothing is absolutely necessary when walking for even short distances, while standing waiting for public transport, or when working outside.

When dressing for the cold outside, it is important to remember that you may have to wear the same clothes inside a mall, a store or a bus, all of which will be heated to "summer" temperatures. It is therefore important to be able to loosen, open or remove outer clothing without embarrassment.

Children and active people keep warm in the Canadian winter by dressing in layers that they can remove if they become overheated through exercise. Typically, layered clothing might be: windproof outer garments such as a windbreaker or wind pants over one or more sweaters, over a heavy shirt, over winter underwear.

Small children in Canada usually wear a "snowsuit": a one-piece, zippered, lined garment that covers the entire body, including a hood for the head. Boots, a scarf across the lower part of the face, and mitts complete this standard outfit for small children.

*What would you consider modest dress and behaviour for a man? For a woman?*

Canadian standards of what is modest and acceptable in dress and behaviour are conditioned by where a person is, and what his or her job entails.

- At the *office*, male executives wear suits or jackets with ties, minimal jewelry (possibly a ring, a wrist-watch, a tie-clip) and black or brown shoes. In the winter, for getting to and from work they also wear a topcoat and hat or a "parka" (a hooded, thigh-length heavy winter coat for men or women, its shape and name derived from Inuit clothing). Female executives dress at the same level of formality, but have a wider set of options, which may include: a conservative dress, or pants or a skirt with blouse and jacket. Shoes with heels from one to three inches, depending on the woman's height and preference are usual, as is minimal jewelry (one or two rings, earrings, necklace), light makeup, and a topcoat appropriate to the temperature.

  Depending on the conventions or rules of individual businesses, secretaries, technicians and support staff dress less formally: shirt and slacks for men; a skirt or pants with a blouse, or a dress for women, and any of a wide variety of shoes.

Salespeople in general follow office clothing conventions.

• On the *job* there are often standards of dress for men and women that are dictated by the type of work they do. For example, "hard hats" are obligatory in construction work, cooks must wear a head covering, doctors and nurses traditionally wear white jackets, and many other occupations have uniforms. Workers of both sexes in companies without uniforms favour hard-wearing clothes often made of denim ("jeans"), usually conforming to local styles and conventions. In winter an insulated jacket, boots and gloves are worn by both sexes for working outside or when travelling to and from work.

• At primary *school and high school*, most children of both sexes wear slacks or jeans, a shirt, "sneakers" (running-shoe type shoes) a light jacket or "windbreaker" in spring and fall, and a lined jacket or parka in the winter. Some schools have dress codes, and a few private and expensive schools have uniforms. Television, video, film and recorded music are increasingly making youth styles similar throughout the world; however, all schoolchildren the world over adapt to local group peer pressures with respect to clothing and how it is worn.

• *University and college* students in Canada, as in many other countries, often follow relaxed or sub-culture conventions in clothing. Ripped, faded, shabby clothes, often with unusual haircuts, are as likely to be worn by young intellectuals in Canada as elsewhere in the world. At the same time and in the same universities, there also are students who dress according to business conventions.

- In *rural areas,* men wear slacks, jeans, running shoes or work boots, and often a peaked "baseball" cap. In winter, they add sweaters, an insulated jacket or parka. Women frequently wear versions of the same kind of clothing. They may wear skirts or dresses, particularly on social occasions. Rural clothing responds less to fashion and more to the needs of the job, the weather, and the presence of biting insects (a major irritant during the summer in many parts of Canada, especially wooded areas and the North).

- *Leisure clothing* (out of office hours, at home, shopping) has fewer marks of status, but it also offers more scope for individuality. Men wear sweaters, slacks, shirts without ties and may in the summer wear shorts — all of which may be more highly coloured and stylishly cut than clothing for the office or job. Even in summer, everyone wears some form of shoes or sandals.

The fashions in men's clothing tend to move more slowly than they do for women, which means that there are many more clothing styles for women than can be described in a few lines. Advertisements in any major newspaper are a good guide to style, price and, to some degree, the context in which different kinds of clothing are worn.

- At the *beach*, at a swimming pool, or within the privacy of their own homes or backyards in the summer, people wear swimsuits of varying degrees of modesty. Generally speaking, Canadians' swimming and sunning wear is considerably more conservative than those of Hollywood or the Côte d'Azur. Upper body nudity is accepted for men, but not for women. Canadians do not change into or out of bathing suits in public.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Newcomers can encounter problems with clothing for three reasons:

- they fail to recognize the need for appropriate winter clothing,
- they encounter different standards of modesty and decorum,
- they encounter misunderstanding of the religious symbolism of items of clothing.

- *Cold* . This problem is practical. Failure to wear enough winter clothing can lead to frostbite or worse. Newcomers from warm climates have difficulty recognizing that cold can severely damage people, and that exposure can be fatal in extreme cases. Newcomers misunderstand the severity of the consequences because it is possible to endure severe cold for short periods — such as getting from a building to a car; while longer exposures — such as waiting for a bus — can involve severe frostbite.

Newcomers often fail to understand that unlike burns, the onset of frostbite and hypothermia is painless.

- *Modesty*, particularly body-modesty, is a cultural value that varies from society to society. Because people learn modesty when they are very young, the first encounter with different standards of modesty can be upsetting.

As is so often the case, there is as much potential for misunderstanding and embarrassment by Canadians as by newcomers. Some newcomers are offended by what they regard as near-nudity — shorts, T - shirts, halter-tops — that are considered acceptable leisure wear during the summer in Canada. On the other hand, Canadians are sometimes offended by what they regard as too-brief swimming wear, or nudity on the part of people from countries where people swim nude or near-nude.

- *Religious* beliefs sometimes demand certain styles or symbolic items of clothing that can be misunderstood by Canadians who have never encountered them before, and who fail to understand their significance.

> *Newcomers should understand that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects their rights to wear their religious symbols or clothing styles as and where they wish.*

Supreme Court of Canada decisions have upheld these rights in important recent decisions. However, newcomers should understand that they may encounter initial hostility from some Canadians who do not understand the significance of their costumes or accoutrements.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about clothing. Use a clothing catalogue, fashion magazine or advertising supplement from a newspaper to introduce price, quality, style in the context of seasons, utility and appropriateness.

- Read weather forecasts and ask the students to suggest how to dress. Be careful to distinguish among ambiguities that rely on a Canadian understanding of what to expect, ie: "A sunny warm day in January, (temperature, 3° C)" and "A sunny, warm day in August (temperature, 30° C)."

- Role play: Tell a child how to dress in Canada's four seasons. Take turns being the adult and the child.

- Have students describe what they are wearing in terms of colour, size, season as well as its name. Ask them to describe what they might have worn 20, 50, 100 years ago.

- Role play someone buying an item of clothing. One student is the salesperson, the other the shopper. Practice in pairs, then present the skit for the class.

- Bring in a size chart and have students discover what size they would ask for in a Canadian store. (Hat, skirt, trousers, socks, etc.)

- Have students talk about clothing for special occasions in their countries, and move to discussion of ways in which Canadians "dress up" for events such as the Calgary Stampede, Winter Carnival, etc.

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# Part 1 Chapter 5 **Shelter**

## Core Concept

Canadian housing is designed to cope with extremes of temperature. As is the case anywhere in the world, there are design features of Canadian homes that must be understood if the dwelling is to be economic and efficient.

## Something to look forward to ...

Newcomers to Canada are frequently surprised and delighted by how much easier it is to keep warm in the Canadian winter than it is in their own countries. The extremes of climate have led Canadians to design homes that offer excellent protection from cold, as well as public spaces such as shopping malls which enclose many shops around a comfortable indoor common space.

## Effects of climate on shelter

*How do you keep homes and buildings warm in your country?*

In Canada, houses, offices and apartment buildings are constructed with insulated walls, double windows and doors, and equipped with central heating (which commonly uses either electricity, oil or natural gas to heat hot air, or hot-water-filled radiators). Most heating systems, as well as the air conditioning found in more upscale apartments, office buildings and homes, are controlled by a thermostat, which maintains the interior at a constant, easily adjustable, temperature. Therefore, if a person is either too warm or cold, it is more fuel-efficient and economical to adjust the thermostat than to open a window.

Fireplaces in most modern Canadian houses are used either because they are a pleasing addition to the room, or as a backup source of heat in emergencies. They are not usually found in less expensive city dwellings. Like household appliances, fireplaces can be dangerous, and should not be used until fully understood.

*What utilities would you expect to be connected to your home in your country?*

In Canada, virtually all buildings in cities and towns are connected to basic utilities that include:

- Fresh drinking water, piped into bathrooms, kitchens and laundry rooms from municipal water systems that purify the water;
- Sewage disposal, piped from bathrooms, kitchens and laundry rooms into municipal sewers that lead to sewage treatment plants;
- Electricity, conducted on wires from provincial electrical generating stations. Electricity is often known as "hydro," which is a short form for "hydro-generated electricity" — even though today the electricity in most regions of Canada is generated by a variety of methods including nuclear, gas and coal;
- Natural gas piped into the home and connected to hot water heaters, stoves and furnaces (in some areas);
- Telephone, connecting the home not only with friends and neighbours, but also providing a number of commercial and emergency

services listed in the telephone book that is supplied with the telephone.

In addition,

- Cable TV is a utility-like television service, carried on wires from a company that provides more channels than would be available "off air" for general reception by a television not connected to cable TV. More than 60% of Canadian homes are connected to cable.

*There is a charge for each of these utilities.*

In many cases, those who rent their homes have some or all their utilities (usually excepting telephone and cable) paid by the landlord, who passes on the charges in the rent.

In rural areas and communities where there are large individual properties, houses sometimes have their own wells. Such isolated buildings dispose of their sewage using a system called a septic tank, which breaks down the sewage and then returns it to the ground through pipes. There are municipal laws demanding high standards for constructing such systems, in order that the land and water do not become polluted.

*In your country, how do people feel about the place where they live ?*

Although many people in cities rent the places in which they live, generally speaking, most Canadians take great pride in their homes, and strive to own a house. Whether or not they own their homes, Canadians take care of where they live to a degree that is not expected by some newcomers. Canadians have a sense of "the neighbourhood" that finds expression in wanting to see not only their own, but their neighbours' homes in good condition. Maintaining the appearance of both the inside and outside of one's house or apartment is therefore a sign of good citizenship. Most cities oblige people by law to mow their lawns and shovel the snow off the sidewalk in front of their homes.

*What rooms would you expect to find in a home in your country?*

In Canada, people refer to where they live as "home," even though it may be an owned or rented house, apartment, town house (row housing) or semi-detached house, or condominium (owned apartment). In addition, some people live in rented rooms either in a private house or rooming house.

Most of these homes (with the exception of the rented room) usually include:

- one or more bedrooms, used for sleeping;
- a kitchen, for preparing and often for eating food;
- a bathroom, including a sink with hot and cold running water, a flush toilet and a bath or shower cubicle;
- a living room in which people might watch television, read, socialize and entertain friends.

Larger and more expensive houses often include (in addition to more bedrooms and a second or even third bathroom):

- a "family room" used mainly by children or by adults on informal social occasions;

- a study, or "den" used for writing, reading or some art or craft such as sewing, painting or music;
- a dining room where food is eaten, particularly on formal occasions;
- a garage, or a covered area for parking called a "carport";
- a "utility room" which characteristically includes a clothes washer and drier and space for ironing or other home chores. The utility room is often located in the basement, and includes the water heater and the furnace that warms the entire house.

Most Canadian homes have a "basement" which is a floor that is all or mostly below ground level. Here you would most likely find a utility room and perhaps in a "finished basement," a family room. Note that a "basement," which implies a heated space that can be used in all seasons, is not a "cellar" which implies an unheated storage space below ground.

Water piped into a home or apartment is safe to drink.

*Would you expect to live close to where you work in your country?*

In Canada, most people live further than walking distance from where they work. In cities, there is usually some form of public transport (usually buses); although many Canadians choose to use a car. Some Canadians car-pool (share transport) or use public transport out of concern for the environment.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Canada's residential buildings may present problems for some newcomers who are not familiar with thermostatically-controlled hot water and space heaters. The consequences can be expensive (when the bills for heating oil, gas or electricity come in), destructive (when property is damaged by leaving windows open in the winter), and even dangerous (when children are exposed to extreme cold).

## Discussion Suggestions

- Discuss and encourage conversations about styles of homes, houses and apartments by showing students the appropriate classified section of different Canadian newspapers. Discuss the furniture and use of different rooms with the help of photographs from magazines and catalogues (Canadian Tire, Sears, etc.). Be careful to avoid using only glossy or "up market" examples.

- Focus on the identification and use of Canadian architectural features such as screen doors and windows, the uses of insulation, storm windows, halls and vestibules, heaters, thermostats.

- Role play the search for a place to live. Assume that people will be renting, and if necessary explain the high total cost of purchasing, the need to qualify for a mortgage. Distinguish between what is considered necessary in

Canada, and distinguish it from what is desirable. Indicate what furniture would be necessary to get started. Language functions: preferences, wishes, hopes, practicalities.

- Go step by step through a lease, explaining such vocabulary as "damage deposit," "heating not included," "no pets," etc.

- Have the students start a check-list of what they might expect to find in a Canadian apartment, and then help them complete it.

- Have the class brainstorm a list of the furniture in a house or apartment.

- Have the class sit in a circle and ask each other simple questions about what they might do in different rooms of a house. "Where do you brush your teeth?" "Where do you study?" "Where do you eat breakfast?" etc.

- Use a copy of the want ads and a city map to introduce the idea of house or apartment hunting. Collectively choose size, location, condition, cost, etc., and then reduce the newspaper list to a few possible alternatives.

- Have the class draw out plans of where they live and then label the different rooms, furniture, appliances etc., as they are in Canada.

- Role-play making a complaint to a landlord about a problem with an apartment. What should emerge includes:
    - Factual matters such as what repairs are the landlord's and what are the tenant's responsibility;

- Language skills of complaining;
- Body language and tone-of-voice when complaining — avoiding what might be interpreted as "whining" or "cringing" on the one hand and "arrogance" on the other;
- Techniques to avoid not losing either one's temper or the argument, including the technique of the "broken record" return to the same basic point after each evasion, excuse or threat from the landlord;
- The possibility of recourse through a tenants' organization, where such an organization exists;
- Taking a friend or fellow-tenant for moral support;
- When to decide that a lawyer is necessary;
- The importance of written documentation of all complaints and the solutions to them (as well as cancelled cheques, etc.).

# Part 1 Chapter 6 **Avoiding Embarrassment**

## Core Concepts

Canadians place a high value on personal and environmental cleanliness.

Canadian conventions of personal hygiene and modesty are at the conservative end of the western international spectrum.

## Appropriate expectations and responses

*In general, how would you characterize the way people deal with each other in public in your country? Forceful? Gentle? Polite? Functional?*

Most Canadians strive to avoid giving or receiving insult, whether deliberately or accidentally. In general, they are polite and private in their dealings with people. They avoid loud-voiced public discussion or argument in the street, in restaurants, businesses or other public places. Canadians tend not to take offence quickly, probably because they are aware that because of linguistic or ethnic reasons, an action or oversight may not have been intended as an insult. Most Canadians respond to interpersonal problems in public — for example, when people or automobiles accidentally bump into each other in a minor accident — by trying to remain calm.

*Do people "line up" or "queue" in your country?*

An example of Canadians' fondness for orderliness is the way they line up according to the principle of "first come, first served." People who push ahead in such a line are strongly resented. This especially applies to dealing with authorities such as customs, immigration, employment, etc.

## Modesty, private and public behaviour

*What standards of modesty govern the exposure of the body and defecation in your country?*

Total nudity is not socially acceptable in Canada, although some urban areas may tolerate more exposure of the body than do rural or more conservative regions.

The existence of "topless" or "nude" bars (where performers dance in little or no clothing) is legal and tolerated, but it is generally considered to be on the fringe of acceptable behaviour.

Genital exposure in public by either sex in Canada is not only socially unacceptable, it is called "indecent exposure," and is against the law.

Public genital exposure by a man, especially in front of women or children, may be regarded even more seriously as a "sexual assault," if it is accompanied by behaviour that could be interpreted as provocative or coercive.

Spitting is considered extremely offensive behaviour in Canada, and is against municipal law in most cities and towns.

## Toilets

*How and where might someone urinate in your country?*

Urinating in public is illegal in Canada. It is called "indecent exposure," and may be punishable as a sexual offence.

> *Do not defecate or urinate anywhere other than in a private or public toilet.*

*What is a typical public toilet in your country, how would you identify it, and how would you use it?*

In Canada, and also in Canadian airlines, toilets are generally standardized with respect to signage and fixtures.

Signage for toilets follows international symbols found in most countries with only minor variations.

Toilets in public places (for example, restaurants, gas stations, airports, hotels, etc.) are segregated by sex, although infants and small children under the age of six can accompany either parent.

An enquiry about toilets can be made without embarrassment by asking, "Where is the washroom, please?" Common euphemisms include: "the bathroom," "the toilet," "the men's" or "the ladies' room."

*What differences exist between "public" and "private" behaviour in your country? Are there differences from place to place?*

Canada is tolerant of affectionate behaviour in public. Holding hands, or kissing in public might be considered by some Canadians to be unusual behaviour, but few would be offended. Extended displays of affection (passionate kissing, fondling, etc.) are considered unacceptable behaviour.

Breast-feeding or diapering babies are considered by many Canadians to be private acts. Breast-feeding in public offends some (particularly older Canadians), although the use of a covering blanket or other privacy shield can be acceptable under circumstances where there is no other possibility (ie: when travelling). These preferences respond to conventions of privacy and respect for the feelings of others, as opposed to law.

As might be expected, Canadian urban conventions are more relaxed, whereas rural areas tend to be more conservative.

*What conventions are there concerning smoking in your country?*

In recent years, Canadians have become much more health-conscious, and are generally convinced that smoking affects not only those who smoke, but also those who are exposed to smoke from other people's cigarettes, cigars and pipes. It is now considered exceedingly discourteous public behaviour to light up a cigarette unless in a designated smoking area (in public places) or with permission of your host or hostess (in private homes). Smoking is banned by law in federal buildings, in elevators, on most flights of Canadian airlines, and controlled by provincial laws or municipal by-laws in many areas such as banks, shops, restaurants and other public places.

## Concepts of time

*How do people in your country deal with concepts of time and promptness in school and on the job?*

Promptness is considered by most Canadians to be essential to the smooth functioning of society. At first, it may not seem important to a newcomer that he or she arrives half an hour or more later than the stipulated time. However, to the Canadian with whom the appointment has been made, this is insulting and thoughtless behaviour.

In the case of jobs and schooling, lateness is punishable. Repeated lateness is considered grounds for firing people from their jobs, suspending them from school, or disallowing government training allowances (such as language training).

In Canada, most people will allow up to five minutes "grace" on an occasional basis. That is, if your work begins at 9 a.m., people may occasionally be up to five minutes late without incurring serious consequences. However, if they are consistently late for work, the behaviour will be taken as a lack of respect for the boss and co-workers, and a failure of commitment to the job. Such a person can expect to be unpopular with co-workers and reprimanded or even fired by the boss.

By contrast, social engagements in the evening or on holidays follow a more relaxed "half-hour rule." Invitations such as "Drop around for a drink at about seven," or "Come for dinner at about eight," etc., are made in the expectation that people will arrive no later than half an hour after the stated time. Sometimes a formal dinner invitation will specify "Seven-thirty to eight," which means that drinks will be served for half an hour before dinner, which will begin promptly at eight.

When people find that they are going to be unavoidably late for an appointment, it is usual for them to telephone ahead, apologize, and re-set a mutually convenient time. Predictable events such as heavy traffic, weather (except for major winter storms) are not excuses for lateness, but rather are "normal delays" which people are expected to anticipate.

Many Canadians will not wait longer than 10 to 15 minutes for someone who has arranged to meet them for business, 15 to 30 for a social meeting. Their reaction may be to consider the meeting cancelled because of lack of interest.

## Cards of identity

*What identification would you carry with you in your country?*

> *People do not need passports or passes to move about in Canada.*

However, there are times when people need to identify themselves, for example: when cashing cheques, applying for jobs or dealing with officials of government at all levels.

A particular example of a need to identify oneself is if asked by a police officer. This could happen under circumstances such as walking alone, late at night; or when driving a car late at night in an unfamiliar area when the driver is going slowly to look for street numbers. The behaviour, even thought it is entirely innocent, is indistinguishable from that of a thief looking for a house to burgle; and for this reason a police officer might ask for identification.

The best attitude to take under such circumstances is to treat the encounter seriously, but routinely — as it is to the police officer. Do not become agitated, or defensive, or make sudden vigorous movements that could be misunderstood, or assume that you are being victimized. Chances are, the police officer is reacting to an unusual event, as he or she is trained to do.

The police officer has the right to ask you to identify yourself, particularly if there is reason for the officer to believe that you might be a burglar or thief. He or she is essentially asking you to give a good reason why you should be where you are, after which he or she will allow you to go on with your business. The quickest and most efficient way to establish yourself as an honest citizen is to tell the officer your name and address, and prove it by producing some kind of identification — for example, a driver's licence, birth certificate or Social Insurance Number ("SIN") card.

An appropriate form of address to a policeman or policewoman is simply "officer."

Particularly if you travel alone to and from work, you should have your own identification cards with you at all times.

If a police officer asks you for some kind of identification — for example, your driver's licence if you are driving a car — *always remove the identification item by itself from your wallet or purse and hand it to the officer.* You wish to make it absolutely clear that you are not offering a bribe, which would be completely unacceptable and absolutely illegal in Canada, and might cause you to be charged with a crime.

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See also Part 2, Chapter 3, Law and Safety of the Person, and
Part 4, Chapter 1, Authority

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In Canada, there are items of identification at least two of which most people carry with them at all times, they are:

- a driver's licence on which is a signature, an address, and in some provinces, a photograph;

  *You must have your driver's licence with you whenever you are driving.*
- a citizenship card;
- a social insurance card — a SIN card;
- a birth certificate.

Canadians assume that everyone has a telephone number at which he or she can be reached relatively easily. Not knowing your telephone number in Canada is almost like not knowing your own address. A newcomer who may be staying with friends or family should try to ensure that there is someone who can speak enough English or French to take a message that captures the name of the person calling, the person's telephone number, and when he or she called.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

The practical problem of dealing with Canadian bathroom fixtures can be embarrassing to both newcomers and Canadians alike, and can lead to misunderstanding and discomfort. This is particularly the case in aircraft on trips of many hours, when the facilities are signed only in English and French.

A common general problem that occurs to people suddenly immersed in a strange culture is that they cling to what they know and find familiar.

Although newcomers are under no legal compulsion to conform, they should be aware that the more and the sooner they adjust to very broad notions of what is acceptable and ordinary, the easier they will find the transition to living comfortably in Canada.

Many school children the world over go through a period in their lives when conformity is more important than individuality. Newcomers should be aware that their children can face strong peer pressure to be the same as everyone else. It is important in a new country to help children find a balance that neither makes them feel uncomfortably conspicuous nor involves their losing their traditions. Sometimes poor grades, unwillingness to attend school, or constant minor ailments can be the symptoms of a child who is under severe cultural stress. In such cases, parents should discuss the matter with the child's teachers or with the school principal.

While there is a high degree of tolerance for unusual clothing, accents, languages, manners, customs and habits in Canada's large cities, unfortunately, there are also people whose racist and intolerant behaviour can make newcomers' lives miserable.

Nothing in the foregoing suggests that newcomers must forgo their heritage as expressed by important traditional marks that have religious, cultural or social significance.

## Discussion Suggestions

- "Survival Language Necessities" that can be memorized.
  "My name is ......*first name*..... ........*family name*.........
  "My family name is .....*family name*......"
  "My address is .... *apartment number, street number, street name, city*."
  "My telephone number is ........"
  "Excuse me, I am new to ...*Canada/Toronto/Halifax, etc*,... can you tell me....?"
  "Excuse me, I am new to Canada, and I did not mean to offend you ..."

- Have each student *spell out* his or her name and address in English or French, using standard Canadian distinctions (first name, last name) and presentation, as above.

- Concentrate on polite phrases and their uses, such as finding the way to a telephone, a bank, various kinds of stores.

- Ensure that students know common words and phrases for elimination, and also the social limitations on the use of these words. Some people may feel reticent to deal with this subject, however, if newcomers are to avoid considerable embarrassment to themselves and to those they meet, they need the information and language skills involved.

- Practice phrases that will avoid embarrassment such as "Where are the toilets, please?"

- Role play simple conversational phrases, swapping the roles of questioner and respondent.

- Role play being asked for identification by a police officer. Swap roles. Make sure that the police officer is played by a woman as well as by a man. Concentrate on appropriate body postures, gestures, movements as well as the words.

- Language functions include: interrupting, excusing oneself, asking for repetition or slower speech, etc.; all with appropriate body language.

# PART TWO

## SAFETY NEEDS

## Shared Symbols of Canada 3

The **Royal Canadian Mounted Police**, better known in Canada as "the RCMP," or "The Mounties" are Canada's national police force. Their distinctive scarlet-coated dress uniform is a well-known symbol of Canada, as is their "Musical Ride" — a precision-drill performed on horseback for ceremonial occasions. The RCMP has played an important part in Canadian history, particularly during the opening up of the West to settlement, and during the gold rush in the Yukon. Unlike the opening of the American west, which was characterized by six-gun lawlessness, the Mounties maintained peace and order in Canada's West and North throughout the early days of settlement and expansion westward.

The RCMP is responsible for enforcing federal statutes (laws) in all of Canada. The provinces are also responsible for enforcing their own laws: Ontario and Quebec have their own provincial police forces, while the other provinces employ the RCMP on contract.

The RCMP is generally acknowledged as a national institution, which is an indication of the strong value Canadians place on "peace, order and good government."

# Part 2 Chapter 1 **Economic Security: Employment**

## Core Concept

Canada balances a high level of social security with a strong work ethic.

## Something to look forward to ...

There is a wide range of assistance to help newcomers become productive wage-earners. They are entitled to apply for specific programs to help get an education or job training. However, like all Canadians, *every newcomer is responsible for finding a job, getting hired and keeping that job.*

In addition to getting help from government departments, newcomers to Canada can find a variety of volunteer helping agencies, many of them specifically dedicated to the needs of newcomers. In large cities, there are also cultural and ethnic associations that represent most national groupings.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

On the one hand, because of legislation such as welfare, medicare and minimum wage laws, no one in Canada need live in fear of starvation, of dying for lack of medical care, or of being coerced to work for sub-standard wages. However, it should be noted that welfare payments only provide the most basic necessities of life.

On the other hand, each person is responsible for his or her own economic well-being, and that of his or her family. *Everyone* must accept the responsibility by finding and keeping a job.

Sometimes, people *forgo* their rights and accept exploitation, usually because they are unaware of those rights and the laws that protect them.

Newcomers have on occasion been so desperate to succeed in a new country that they have allowed themselves to be exploited. Sadly, exploitation can be either by multi-generation Canadians or by members of their own national or ethnic group.

> It should be noted that some people in Canada work for wages that are far below ideal levels. The point is that there are both laws and established practices that newcomers should know before accepting wages that will not bring them an adequate living.

## Understanding the Canadian economic situation

*What do most of the people in your country do for a living?*

More than one quarter of all working Canadians are employed in managerial and professional jobs (28 out of 100). There are as many females as males in these occupations, but generally speaking, men hold the majority of senior jobs.

Other types of work that employ large numbers of people include clerical work, service jobs, sales and processing, machining and fabrication. Five out of ten working Canadians are employed in these areas. Generally speaking, women hold the majority of clerical and service jobs, as opposed to the relatively fewer jobs of supervising such work.

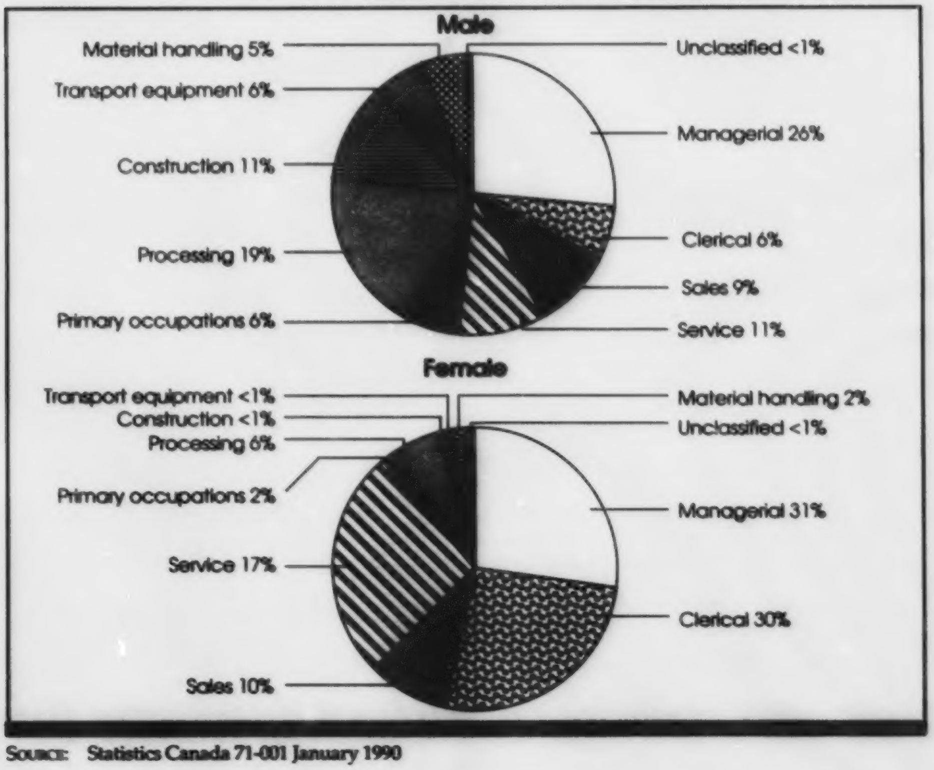
Although only relatively small numbers of people work in such occupations as farming, fishing, hunting, mining, forestry, construction, transport equipment, materials handling and crafts, the workers are most likely to be male. In total, only one in four working males is employed in these occupations. Only three or four working Canadians out of 100 are involved in farming, which in Canada is a highly-specialized and mechanized occupation.

The following chart gives a breakdown of different occupations in terms of sex.

See also Part 4 Chapter 2, Economics — Banking, Saving, Spending

[See desk-top kit, Distribution of Labour Force by Occupation.]

Distribution of Labour Force by Occupation

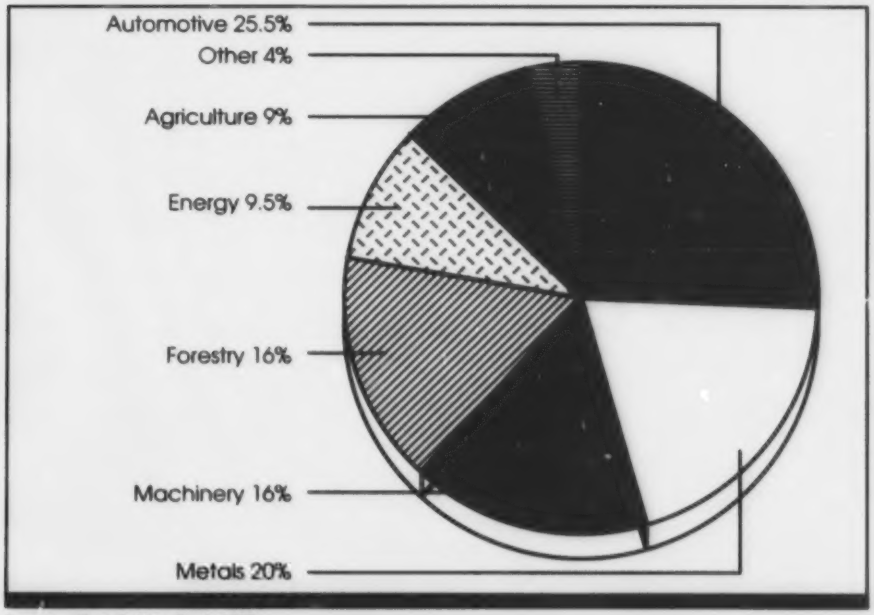


SOURCE: Statistics Canada 71-001 January 1990

*What does your country produce for export?*

[See desk-top kit, Canadian Exports.]

Canadian Exports



SOURCE: Canada Year Book, 1990

*What is the source of your country's economic wealth?*

Canada is unusual, in that it is a country producing both abundant raw materials and sophisticated technology. Canadians work at a great number of different occupations including primary producers such as farmers, miners, and people in other resource industries, and scientists, engineers and technicians in fields such as electronic communication and space research.

Because Canadians must cope with long distances between populous areas, Canadians have made important contributions to the international transportation and communication industries.

## Qualifications for Employment

*What education or training does the average person in your country need and receive?*

In Canada, school and high school education is compulsory (ie: it is a legal requirement to age 16), and does not involve tuition fees (ie: it is paid by taxes). (In addition to the schools and high schools that are paid for by taxes, there are also so-called "private" schools which are paid for by tuition fees.) NOTE: Universities, colleges, technical schools and other advanced educational opportunities are **not** free. Although advanced education is subsidized by government, education beyond high school is paid for in part by tuition and other fees charged to individual students.

- For example, university tuition fees for residents in Canada are approximately $2,000 for one full-time academic year (September to April) in pursuit of a general Bachelor of Arts (BA). Specialized degrees (law, medicine, etc.) are more expensive, and there is some variation from university to university and province to province, but the point is that the fees are substantially less than for universities in many parts of the world.

Completing high school is the basic requirement for most jobs — even those that are low-paying. Further education at a community college, technical college or university is necessary for many jobs and all careers. Although all education beyond high school involves paying fees, scholarships, bursaries and student loans at a low rate of interest help those who have the necessary academic standing but lack financial means.

There are many people born in Canada *as well as* newcomers who are at a disadvantage because they lack the skills and knowledge that are now a necessity in almost every field of endeavour.

Government in Canada offers education and training assistance so that more people will be able to compete for the increasingly complicated jobs of the present and future. Canada sees this policy as an investment in the nation's prosperity and its international economic competitiveness. According to UNESCO, Canada spends considerably more in per capita terms on education (7% of GDP) than most other countries, and only Sweden and the USA have more students in universities (on a per capita basis).

See also Part 3 Chapter 4, Education

*How many people in your country are functionally illiterate?*

Canadian governments at all levels are concerned with the problem of illiteracy. According to the Canadian Encyclopedia, one in six adults in Canada is functionally illiterate in one of the two official languages; that is, he or she has less ability to read and comprehend than a person educated to grade 9. Complete illiteracy — the inability to read at all — probably affects no more than one in two hundred Canadians. In addition, there are people who are functionally illiterate or who have very limited reading skills in one or both of Canada's official languages. Statistical studies have found that this is particularly the case for newcomers who are women or elderly.

Compassion would be reason enough to care for people enduring the difficulties and even dangers of living as an illiterate. There are also social consequences that can be measured in terms of foregone employment, dependency on social services and the increased likelihood of accidents as a result of not being able to read warning signs and labels.

One of the aims of Canada's Literacy Initiative is to overcome embarrassment about illiteracy and the resultant social isolation. Local Boards of Education will respond to anonymous queries about literacy programs in their area.

*What skills, qualifications and experience did you acquire in your country, and will you be able to use them in Canada?*

Standards are not the same all over the world, and every country has its own ways of doing things. In fact, standards for many trades and professions vary slightly from province to province in Canada, and people born and educated in Canada must often re-qualify if they move from province to province.

Doctors, lawyers, nurses, engineers and other professional people will find that they must re-qualify in Canada. The most important aspect of being qualified in Canada is a high level of proficiency in at least one of the two official languages.

Re-qualifying varies by profession and province. It may involve going back to professional school or university in order to satisfy the standards of the associations that licence each profession. Before and during that time, it will probably be necessary to improve spoken English or French. While learning a new language and re-qualifying, newcomers will usually need to accept employment at a lower level than their occupation in their country of origin.

Newcomers should be aware that in some professional fields (medicine, for example) there are numerical limits on the number of people who may qualify each year. Preference is given to people who have graduated from a Canadian university over those who have degrees from other countries and subsequently have re-qualified in Canada. Even after having re-educated themselves, newcomers have found themselves unable to get the necessary qualifications to practice their profession in Canada.

Sometimes, a lack of ability with English or French leads newcomers to take jobs (for example, as office cleaner or production line worker) that require few or no language skills, and that offer little opportunity to learn more. At this stage, it is a good idea for newcomers to take a job that will increase their command of English or French, even if it is not particularly well-paid (for example, as waiter/waitress or fast-food worker).

In Canada, there is considerable negative feeling towards not having a job at all, but relatively little or no social stigma at taking a job below one's qualifications or experience. Indeed, it sometimes surprises newcomers that in Canada, people who work with their hands such as carpenters, plumbers, electricians etc., both earn a good living and are respected in their communities. Newcomers from some countries may have difficulty recognizing the implications of the Canadian value system with respect to work and jobs. Most Canadians feel that it it is better to look for a job *while* they are working, than to draw social security while waiting for the ideal job to appear.

After several years in Canada, many newcomers say that their first job was only a stepping-stone towards what they later accomplished.

*Are there people in your country who are overqualified for their jobs?*

Qualifications alone will not get you the job you want in Canada. Employers look for experienced people who will immediately become productive assets to their businesses, and they may hesitate to hire someone who does not appear to be able to cope with Canadian ways, especially if they lack command of English or French. This cautious approach is not necessarily the result of either bigotry or racism. The law protects people from discrimination based on who they *are*, but it does not interfere with an employer's right to decide whether to hire people based on his or her assessment of candidates' qualifications and ability to do the job.

As a consequence, newcomers to Canada must learn to promote or "sell" or "market" themselves and their abilities rather than merely relying on their qualifications. They should also recognize that there are often differences in the way in which a job, skill or task is done in Canada from the way they learned it in their country of origin. These differences are particular instances of cultural difference, but because they are also differences in trade or professional approach, both sides often perceive the other as "incorrect" when in fact there is only a difference of approach.

This is not to deny that there is discrimination and racism in Canada. In response, government at both federal and provincial levels has instituted Human Rights Commissions.

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See Part 4 Chapter 3, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism, and Part 3 Chapter 3, Women's, Children's and Senior Citizens' Rights

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## Who has jobs?

*Who has jobs in your country? Men? Women? Both? Are there differences in the jobs they do?*

In Canada, most adults work outside the home.

Well within living memory, most Canadian men went out to work, while most women stayed at home to raise children. In less than half a lifetime, this has changed and still is changing. Canadians are all learning to live with important economic and social alterations to society, of which women working is only one aspect.

Some of the more important symptoms of this change are:

- Many families are "double income" — that is, both the husband and the wife work outside the home.
- Family size has declined from an average of 3 or even 4 children per family, to a statistical average of fewer than 2.
- Many women and younger people are taking part-time jobs.
- Women make up an increasingly large portion of the work force and are also taking more important positions within the work force.
- Laws and customs are changing to ensure equal pay and opportunities for men and women.

Canada is among the more progressive countries in the world when it comes to offering equality of opportunity in the workplace.

However, Canada is not perfect. Women still tend to hold lower-paying jobs, and women account for a relatively small percentage of the more highly-paid, influential positions. In particular, women are under-represented at the senior levels of government and business, and over-represented in some "ghettoized" jobs such as office support staff positions.

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See also Part 4 Chapter 1, Authority, particularly with respect to women

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*In your country do people think of a "job ladder" or "career path" up which an individual can climb?*

Canadians tend to be "upwardly mobile," that is, to be constantly looking for a better job. This, coupled with the fact that there are few jobs considered "menial" or beneath anyone's dignity, means that a great number of Canadians start out doing work that comparable people in other countries might be ashamed to do. For instance, many Canadians who are now professional people, business people, senior industrialists and bureaucrats worked as waiters, manual workers, cleaners and other low-paying jobs in order to make money to go to university.

*What is the role of trade unions in your country?*

Trade unions are an established aspect of the Canadian work environment. Nearly 30% of the labour force in civilian jobs are union workers, and there is both legislation and established regulations and practices that affect the union-management bargaining process. It is not necessary to join a union to get a job, although some jobs are "closed shop" that is, you must join the union when you accept the job.

*In your country, are there people who volunteer to work on social and community projects?*

Volunteerism is an important part of Canada's economy. Most Canadians derive great personal satisfaction from using their talents and skills for the public good. Whether they volunteer as individuals to work in a local organization such as a hospital, nursing home or school, or belong to organizations with a social purpose such as the Red Cross Society, or join lay organizations such as the Rotary International, or religious groups such as the Knights of Columbus, they provide important services to the public. Many newcomers encounter volunteers from the moment of their arrival in Canada. Often, government will partially fund volunteer organizations (sometimes called "NGOs" or Non-Governmental Organizations) which then deliver services such as language training and orientation for newcomers — as well as other services for many other target groups in the fields of social welfare, health, education and sport.

## Searching for a job

*How would you set about looking for a job in your country?*

The following check-list captures some of the most important elements of a successful job search in Canada.

1. Make a realistic description of:
    (a) the job(s) you would like,
    (b) the job(s) you would accept at a pinch while looking for something better.
2. Collect all the documents you might need:
    - educational diplomas, degrees, certificates and other qualifications, translated into English or French, preferably officially;
    (NOTE: The Canada Employment Centres can arrange for this translation service, but it takes time, and should be started as soon as possible.)

- letters of recommendation;
- Social Insurance Number ("SIN");
- driver's licence;
- résumé of education, work experience, qualifications, etc.

3. Learn about the labour market in your area. The local Canada Employment Centre can help you understand what jobs may be available where you are. You could also examine the industrial directory for your community, the yellow pages of the telephone book, and factual statistical material published by your city or town in order to find out what kind of work is done in your area, so that you can apply — even though there may not be an advertised vacancy.

4. Start and expand a network of people who might be able to direct you towards a job. *Do not keep your job-search private!!* Looking for a job in Canada is *not shameful*. Quite the reverse! You are more likely to find people who will encourage and help if you are direct. Say, "I'm looking for a job as a .... Can you help me?" or "Do you have any suggestions?"

*Most jobs are found through networking than through advertisements*. A network will also help you keep your courage up.

5. Check and follow up on advertisements, want ads, posted jobs on the "Job Boards" in Canada Employment Centres. Beware of seemingly amazing opportunities advertised in newspapers that call for "a small investment," because they may be exceedingly risky ventures operated by people on the edge of the law.

6. Go in person to interviews, even if they are brief. Telephone enquiries are rarely successful.

7. Don't wait to be called: check back after interviews.
8. Don't look for only one job.
9. Don't wait for a particular job to come up: keep looking. Leave your résumé and/or fill in applications at companies that might hire you, even if they have not vacancies at present.
10. Don't overdo interviews and telephone calls. If you have heard "No" many times, talk with a friend, do something you enjoy. If you seem depressed or desperate, you are unlikely to impress a potential employer. It can take as many as 20 interviews to find a job.
11. Don't despair and don't give up. Believe that you *can* find a job.

*How would you behave at a job interview in your country?*

The following check-list capture some of the most important elements of a successful interview in Canada.

*Do's*

1. Know the exact time and place. *Be early, NEVER late.*
2. Be able to pronounce the company's or organization's name, and the name of the interviewer. Know something about what the company is and does.
3. Dress appropriately. The interview is a formal event, for which it is important to be clean, neat, and dressed as you would appear in public. The job itself may involve wearing work clothes that get dirty, but this is not a reason for appearing for the interview looking as if you were actually doing the work.
4. Shake hands only if the interviewer offers you his/her hand.
5. Go alone. Do *not* take a friend or family member.

6. Talk about your qualifications, experience and willingness to work, *not* about your family, problems or difficulties — unless you are asked.
7. Know in advance what is a realistic wage for the work offered. (Ask someone who works there or at a similar job.)
8. Be ready to show proof of your qualifications — education and training certificates. Be factual, realistic and straightforward about wages.
9. Be brief, answer questions directly and factually. Speak clearly.
10. Talk about specific jobs or duties. Be very clear in your own mind exactly what the job you are offered entails. Be prepared to accept a job that is not everything you wanted, but also be prepared to say "no" if your conscience forbids you.
11. Talk factually about what you have done that relates directly to what you may be doing in the job for which you are applying, *particularly where Canadian experience is concerned*. Show that even though you may not know *exactly* how the job is done in this particular instance, you know *enough* to get started. Look for opportunities to show that you have operated this or that system or machine in your country of origin.
12. Thank the interviewer when you leave. If he/she tells you that you will *not* be hired, realize that this is not a personal rejection, and that the interviewer probably does not enjoy telling you to go away. Make a difficult situation better for both of you by asking for suggestions where you might look next.
13. Smile!

*Don'ts*

1. Don't fidget, don't look nervous.
2. Don't sit down until the interviewer asks you to.
3. Don't put your personal belongings or your hands on the interviewer's desk.
4. Don't argue.
5. Don't interrupt.
6. Don't ask about wages, vacations, breaks, etc., early in the interview, because the interviewer will usually raise these issues him/herself. If he or she does not do so, ask politely towards the end of the interview.
7. Don't discuss politics.
8. Don't tell jokes, don't criticize.
9. Don't smoke.
10. Don't denigrate yourself ("put yourself down") for lack of language skills — or any other lack of ability.

*REMEMBER: Lying in an interview or on a résumé is grounds for being fired when the lie is discovered.*

## Special employment-related programs for newcomers

*What does your country do to help newcomers get settled?*

There are federal and provincial programs and services that help people find employment and to help those in difficulty pay for food and shelter. These programs are available to newcomers, and in addition there are additional programs exclusively to help people settle in Canada and become self-supporting more easily and quickly. These programs include assistance for those who entered Canada under "family class" or "assisted relative sponsorship." The federal programs for newcomers include:

- the Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP);
- the Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP);
- the Reception Houses;
- the Direct Purchase Option, which is a federal program that buys language instruction courses for newcomers, which are conducted by provincial schools and community colleges;
- the Language at Work (LAW) program, which provides courses in language, literacy and numeracy, specifically for women;
- the Settlement Language Program (SLP);
- Job-finding clubs;
- the Host Program;
- the Transportation Loan Program.

**Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP)**

Newcomers who need funds to help pay for basic food, clothing, shelter and household needs can be helped by GRANTS from Employment and Immigration Canada's Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP). These CONTRIBUTIONS are only given to people who do not have another source of money or sponsorship, and are at the same level as social assistance ("welfare") rates in the respective provinces. They do NOT have to be repaid. HOWEVER, there are strict rules that limit Adjustment Assistance contributions to people who are in need. Those who have money of their own are not eligible. Those who do receive contributions must keep a detailed record of expenses which are limited to basic needs such as food, rent and clothing.

Newcomers who need money to pay for rental deposits or telephone service deposits can be LOANED money under Employment and Immigration Canada's Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP). These LOANS must be repaid.

AAP contributions are paid in advance, that is, for the *next* two weeks. However, jobs and training allowances pay *after* the first two weeks. AAP will LOAN money to help newcomers with their first two weeks on the job or on training. These LOANS must be repaid.

**Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP)**

Newcomers who need help finding housing, a family doctor, a job, placing their children in school and so on can be helped by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). These NGOs are non-profit, volunteer organizations that help newcomers during their first years in Canada. They are funded by Employment and Immigration Canada under ISAP to provide initial, basic settlement services, including translation and interpretation, job-finding assistance, orientation and information, non-professional counselling and referral to other community services. The NGOs also receive funding from the federal Departments of Secretary of State and Health and Welfare Canada, as well as from provincial and municipal governments, and by voluntary contributions from the public.

### Reception Houses

There are 16 Reception Houses across Canada that provide government-assisted refugees with temporary accommodation until they can find an apartment to rent. In communities where there is no Reception House, the federal government pays for government-assisted refugees to stay in a budget-priced hotel until they find an apartment to rent. Refugees are expected to search for an apartment, and should only spend a few days or weeks at the most in either of these temporary arrangements.

Reception Houses are operated by non-profit, voluntary Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that help newcomers when they first arrive in Canada. Reception Houses help people settle in to life in Canada. Usually, they have staff members who can speak a variety of languages, or have interpreters on call. They are funded by Employment and Immigration Canada(EIC) under the AAP.

### Job Finding Clubs

Newcomers who need help writing résumés, practicing job interviews and developing the skills and attitudes necessary to finding a job can join one of the 10 to 12 Job Finding Clubs run by non-profit, volunteer organizations (NGOs) across Canada. Job Finding Clubs are also run by Canada Employment Centres.

### Language Training

Language training is funded by Employment and Immigration Canada, and is offered three different ways.

1. Newcomers can be referred by the CEC counsellors into a language class

usually operated by a community college, funded by Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC). These language classes are usually full-time, all-day courses of about six months in duration. The classes are designed to provide the basic English or French that is needed to get a job.
Usually, there are not enough courses for all those who would like language training. This is what CEC calls **"Direct Purchase"** language training.

2. Newcomers can be referred to the **Language at Work (LAW)** program which helps people with English or French while they are working, *provided that* the employer has agreed to run the program. Because the LAW program is still new, it is only available in a few workplaces.

3. For newcomers who do not intend to enter the work force there is a **Settlement Language Program** offered through Non -Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and funded by Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC).

NOTE: Many immigrants and refugees go to work soon after they arrive in Canada, and therefore take evening classes in English or French at their own cost. These part-time courses are offered at community colleges, high schools and universities for a fee. This process is the same as that used by established Canadians who want to learn a language or develop a skill.

**The Host Program**

The Host Program is a system of voluntary exchange in which established Canadians befriend a newcomer family and help them improve their language skills and learn about Canada. In return, the hosts have the opportunity to learn more about the country from which the newcomers have come.

**Transportation Loan Program**

Newcomers who need financial assistance to cover medical examinations, travel and other administrative costs of coming to Canada can be LOANED money by Employment and Immigration Canada. The visa office can approve transportation loans based on need and the ability to repay.

Transportation loans are also available to landed immigrants or the sponsors of people immigrating to Canada. Canada Immigration Centres can approve these transportation loans based on need and the sponsor's ability to repay the loan.

These loans are made from an account with a fixed sum of money. In other words, unless the loans are repaid, there will not be sufficient money for other newcomers needing travel loans.

Further information about all these programs is available at Canada Employment Centres of Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC).

It is important that newcomers are not confused between social assistance and loans. Newcomers should be aware that loans from government are like any other loan in that they must be repaid. The opportunity for genuine confusion is great, as is the potential for excuses.

*What does the government in your country do to help people find jobs and become self-supporting?*

In Canada, all levels of government take an interest in reducing the number of people who are not self-supporting. Federal initiatives in helping find and create jobs include programs, some of which are directed to employers, some to employees. *Both newcomers and established Canadians can use these programs and services.*

Further information about all these programs is available at Canada Employment Centres of the Department of Employment and Immigration.

Canada Employment Centres operate as labour exchanges, where some employers list their job vacancies, and where unemployed workers register and are referred to jobs. In each Centre, the job vacancies are posted on a "Job Board" where they can be read by unemployed people who then can assess whether they are qualified, what the working hours are, where the jobs are, how much they pay, etc., before applying for them.

## Concepts that are often difficult to grasp

Newcomers often have difficulty with the language of government. They are not alone: ordinary Canadians face the same problems understanding what they are entitled to, and how they should go about applying for it.

A "program" is essentially a sum of money set aside by government for a carefully-designed purpose, for example, teaching one of the two official languages to newcomers. The government decides on how much money should be allocated year by year. The money is allocated geographically across Canada, and very seldom is more money added to a program during the course of each year. Because there is no way of knowing in advance exactly how many people will apply for any particular program, sometimes there is more than enough money in one location, while in another there is not enough. This means that in one place, say Toronto, a newcomer may have to wait six to eight months to get a place in government-sponsored language training; while in another place, say Halifax, the waiting period may be as short as one month.

Many newcomers (and Canadians) assume that they can get money, training, education or some other service on the basis of reading only a short description of a program or service — such as the brief paragraphs in this chapter. In practice, they may not be eligible because of some detail of qualification, timing or availability of funding. Conversely, there may well be opportunities available to newcomers that are not apparent on reading a brochure or a program description. People often make the mistake of going into a government office such as a Canada Employment Centre and asking for one thing — say, a seat in a language class — and then when they are told that they will have to wait 10 weeks, going away and never returning. Instead, they should talk to the official at the Canada Employment Centre to see if there is a "fit" between their needs and the programs available. Perhaps the language class is full, but there is a class starting for women re-entering the job market for which the newcomer would be qualified under the rules. Perhaps there are no jobs for a person with an individual newcomer's experience and education, but there is a local job-finding club that can help improve his or her chances of getting a job more quickly than by looking alone.

On the one hand, it is important *not* to take anyone with you to a job interview; on the other, it is often an excellent idea to take a friend with you when you go to a government office. This is the case if the friend is more skilled with the language — particularly the language of government.

> *Always take your documents with you: without information, the government official can do little or nothing to help you.*

Documents include: education and training diplomas and certificates, SIN number, proof of legal arrival in Canada. You should also have a telephone number at which you can be reached easily, and a permanent address.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

"Qualify" and "qualifications" are words used differently by government officials and employers. The government wants to know if a person "qualifies" under a program, which may require knowing if he or she has children, is a landed immigrant or a refugee, has relatives in Canada, and so on. Employers want to know if someone has the "qualifications" for a particular job, that is, whether the person is trained and experienced to do the job productively. Thus on the one hand, personal difficulties and problems are relevant and necessary; whereas on the other, they are intrusive and may cause potential employers to feel that an appeal is being made to their sympathy which is inappropriate in the world of business. If newcomers confuse the different senses of the words, they will not make the approach that matches the situation, and may find themselves being misunderstood.

Upward mobility, or the ability to move to a better job, is for many newcomers a new concept, as is the fact that low-paying jobs are less negatively viewed by Canadians than is such employment in many countries.

Newcomers from different economic systems or economies with a different base or at a different stage of development from Canada may have unreal expectations about employment in Canada. This is particularly the case when newcomers are used to doing by hand, work that in Canada is done using complicated machinery.

Sometimes newcomers discover that their skills are valuable in Canada, but only under different circumstances than in their former country.

- For example, newcomers who are women with highly-developed skills in sewing have found employment in the upper levels of the clothing market, and in some cases have eventually run their own businesses. The same women might well have become underpaid, overworked seamstresses except for their willingness to discover and fulfill a specialized economic need.

- For example, men with agricultural skills in their own country, but who lack the investment and training necessary to own and run a farm in Canada, have started by working in florist and greenhouse operations. Sometimes these men have eventually owned such businesses .

If they are buoyed up by false expectations of quick and easy wealth in Canada, newcomers can be vulnerable to unscrupulous people — some of whom may even profess kinship through language, ethnicity or experience. Newcomers can be rushed into business schemes that may be ill-advised or even exploitative. Generally speaking, if a scheme looks too good to be true, then it is. If a proposal seems contrary to law or conscience, it at least should be checked with an independent lawyer.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Concentrate conversation on jobs and expectations, correcting the impression that finding and holding a job in Canada are easy tasks.

- Practice self-statement of abilities, concentrating on factual, verifiable presentation that takes into account differences in qualifications and ways of doing jobs. Students should practice distinguishing clearly between what people are trained to do, what they have experience doing, and what they would like to do. They should be corrected for either exaggeration (which can be seen as lying) or understatement (which may be believed literally).

- Dressing for interviews. Have the students take turns telling and being told by their classmates what to wear and how to behave. Language functions include: compliments, suggestions, personal observations. Correct misperceptions of what is stylish or appropriate, and point out what some clothing can be understood to mean in Canada — sexual preferences, sexual availability, etc.

- Talking to officials. Role-play asking about a government program or service. Emphasize the need to understand and be understood in an interaction that should be polite but not personal.

# Part 2 Chapter 2 **Shopping**

## Core Concept

Shopping in Canada means learning a new set of conventions about what can be bought, where and for how much.

## Some things to look forward to...

Shopping in Canada means making choices. The virtually endless supply of goods available makes it very important to make choices, and to know exactly what you need and what you can afford.

The corollary is that one must be prepared to compare prices and quality and make choices — including the choice not to buy now.

It is best to know in advance how people shop in Canada, so that your expectations are in tune with Canadian norms.

There are laws that protect consumers from unsafe or dishonestly advertised goods and services.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

The Canadian economy offers a wide, and sometimes bewildering, range of goods, along with sophisticated marketing and advertising designed to persuade people to buy. The problem confronting many newcomers is the abundance and choice characteristic of the Canadian marketplace. The delight in finding so much for sale can turn into the disappointment of not being able to buy enough, and even to the despair of having overspent.

## Shopping (general)

*In your country, where do you go to buy things you need?*

In a Canadian city, "going shopping" might mean going to a "mall." Malls are a relatively new development in shopping in North America; they have only been in existence for about 20 years. They are popular because of Canada's harsh winter climate, as well as for the variety of services and goods they offer and the fact that they offer one-stop, easy-parking convenience for people driving cars.

A mall is a very large building containing many separate stores that open onto a common enclosed area. Each store seems to be independent, but as you go from mall to mall in Canada, you recognize that many are units in chains of stores that use their combined buying power to obtain the products and services they sell. In malls, there are often competing speciality stores, each selling different kinds of clothing, shoes or accessories such as jewelry, as well as perhaps a bookstore, a record and tape store, a florist, a "drug store" or pharmacy, a magazine and tobacco store, and one or more fast-food restaurants. In a large mall of more than 20 or 30 stores, you would expect to find different shops for men's and women's work, leisure, fashion and sports clothes, each offering different qualities and prices. Often a mall includes a "supermarket" for food, a "department store," (described later in this chapter) a cinema (one screen) or cineplex (more than one screen), and usually a bank.

Department stores offer a wide range of goods. They have names such as Eaton, Sears, and The Bay, some of which have been in existence for generations in Canada. These stores, which offer a wide variety of merchandise, are in cities throughout Canada. Characteristically, they sell furniture, fabrics, clothing, jewelry; "small appliances" (toasters, electric kettles, irons, etc.); "hardware" (tools and equipment for the home), china, glass, cutlery, kitchen equipment; "major appliances" (refrigerators, clothes washers, clothes dryers, dishwashers, etc.).

In most cities, all of these products are also available in independent stores which compete with the department stores and mall stores.

It is important to remember that in a mall, you should pay for anything you buy before leaving each individual store; and in a department store, you should pay at the nearest "cashier." You can usually pay either in cash or by credit card. Your purchase will be wrapped or placed in a distinctive bag along with a receipt, so that it is clear to anyone that you have indeed bought it, and are not merely walking out the door with it in your hand. Failing to pay for purchases is called "shoplifting." This is theft, and is punishable by law. A receipt is also a proof of purchase should what you have bought prove to be broken, defective or unsuitable. Better stores will exchange or refund under such circumstances, unless the item has been marked "final sale."

*Do people "line up" or "queue" when they are shopping in your country?*

Particularly when paying in any store, Canadians usually line up so that the transactions can go forward in an orderly manner according to the principle of "first come, first served." People who push ahead in such a line are strongly resented. The same idea of lining up or queuing is found at most public events such as theatres, films, buses, trains and other similar occasions.

*When you are buying things in your country, how do you interact with the person who is selling to you?*

Salespeople in Canada usually approach customers on an impersonal but polite basis. Many people who work in chain or department stores in Canada are employees who are paid by the hour rather than by the value of products they sell. As a result, they may seem casual about their jobs. Generally speaking, in Canadian malls and department stores, salespeople may ask "May I help you?" but they are unlikely to place any significant verbal pressure on you to buy unless they are working "on commission," which means that they are paid by the value of what they sell. (Large items such as stoves, refrigerators, beds and other furniture, as well as some women's clothing are routinely sold by people working "on commission.")

Bargaining, which is a shopping convention in many countries, does not occur in most Canadian stores of the kind you will find in malls. This is because the person who takes the money and wraps the purchase rarely has any control over the price of any item. Essentially, the price you must pay is the price that is marked on the price tag, unless it has a special price because it is "on sale," "marked down," or "—% off." However, you *can* expect to bargain for so-called "big ticket items" such as cars, furniture, major appliances, etc.

*Would you expect to bargain for the best price in your country?*

Instead of "bargaining," that is, when the customer and the salesperson argue over the price, Canadians "look for bargains," that is, they examine the prices for the same or similar items in different stores, looking for lower prices; they also read newspapers and advertising flyers for coupons (good for discounts) or to find out about "sales." Canadian stores regularly have "sales" when they lower all or some prices for a short time; and they often have "feature items" or "advertised specials" at lower prices to encourage people to buy. The wise shopper checks prices at both department and specialty stores before buying.

Both newcomers and established Canadians sometimes prefer to shop in small, independently-owned and operated stores located on shopping streets found in Canadian cities, just as they do anywhere else in the world. Here they find that, generally speaking, the more specialized a store is, the more the people selling in it will know about their products. However, the prices for some basic items (clothing, furniture, appliances) may be higher in these independent stores than they are in chain or department stores.

In rural and remote areas in Canada there still are what is known as "general stores" where a small selection of many products is sold, including clothing, tools, fabrics and even furniture. The Hudson's Bay Company Store, now known as "The Bay" is a long-standing tradition in Canada's North. Frequently it is the only store in smaller communities.

## Shopping for food

*Where and how would you expect to buy food in your country?*

Canadian families buy most of their food at large grocery stores called *"supermarkets."* Generally, these stores are part of large chains with names such as A & P, Loblaws, Steinberg, IGA, Safeway, Superstore, Sobey's, Co-op. Supermarkets are self-serve, that is, customers select what they want from counters and shelves on which packaged foods are displayed, place them in a wheeled wire cart, and then pay for the purchases at a check-out counter before leaving.

Smaller grocery stores in the cities cater to single people, and those seeking specialty foods and/or food products from outside Canada. Some of these stores cater mainly to newcomers from a particular area or country. In general, these small stores are significantly more expensive than supermarkets, especially when purchasing staples such as flour, rice, sugar, tea, etc.

Generally speaking, Canadians do their grocery shopping once each week rather than every day, although milk, bread and other perishables may be bought more frequently. Many people prepare dishes ahead of time and freeze them either in the freezer compartment of their refrigerators, or in a separate freezer. Fruits , meat and fish can be preserved in this way for up to six months. Increasingly, the task of buying food is shared between men and women.

*How would you get the best prices in your country?*

Most grocery stores attract customers by offering "weekly specials" on seasonal foods, on products in oversupply, or on "generic" or "no-name" products that are not distinguished by a commercial brand name. The astute shopper can always find bargains without compromising quality, because all food sold in supermarkets must pass strict government inspections.

Generally speaking, it is always more economical to prepare your own food rather than to purchase convenience-packaged ready-to-eat foods, or to eat in restaurants.

Bargaining with the salespeople in supermarkets is not usually a part of shopping in Canada, although people often point out a damaged but usable can, or out-of-date but acceptable perishable, or not-so-fresh but still edible produce to the appropriate department manager (produce, meat, dairy, canned goods) or to the store manager, who usually will reduce the price. However, many established Canadians feel embarrassed to or ashamed to ask, even though they might well choose products that have been already "marked down."

*Who would you expect to see when you are shopping for food?*

Because it is self-service, supermarket shopping is more impersonal than specialty-store shopping. In a supermarket, you are unlikely to interact with the butcher, or the person who buys the food products that are for sale. You will probably see people at work stocking the shelves, but they are not necessarily knowledgeable about the products they are handling.

*Are there open-air markets in your country?*

Many Canadian cities have open-air or "farmers'" markets in the summer, which are similar to such markets the world over. In such places, the activity of shopping for food is as much an experience as what is actually being bought. People do business directly with the butcher, greengrocer, baker or their assistants, who are usually knowledgeable about the products they sell.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Some newcomers are overwhelmed by shopping in Canada, and seek the security of shopping only in stores that are familiar because of links to the country from which they have come. Some find their judgement influenced by advertising which seems to demand that they spend more than they can afford. Some retain inappropriate cost and price assumptions shaped by experience in their previous country — for instance, buying fruit or vegetables that are cheap there, but expensive imports in Canada.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about buying, selling and cost in order to communicate the idea of the price "as priced," the idea of the "advertised special," etc.

- Role play buying and selling, encouraging the Canadian patterns of behaviour.

- Hand out real or made-up flyers and coupons, advertising supplements and catalogues to the class. Have the class find out the best buy for a number of different commodities by comparison-shopping, taking account of both price and quality.

- Role-play returning an item (for example, sour milk or non-fitting clothing) to a store for credit or replacement. Language skills include stating a complaint, insisting, asking for redress.

- An advanced group might discuss the nature and function of advertising, noting when it provides helpful information and when it appeals largely to greed through flattery, sexual innuendo, prestige appeal, etc.

# Part 2 Chapter 3 **Law and Safety of the Person**

## Core Concepts

Canadians believe strongly in the rule of law, and in equality before it.

There is one federal criminal code that applies throughout Canada.

In Canada, there is a separation of church and state.

## Something to look forward to ... and something to maintain ...

Your human rights are guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Three of the most significant passages are articles 2, 7 and 15:

> 2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:
> (a) freedom of conscience and religion;
> (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
> (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and
> (d) freedom of association.
>
> 7. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice.
>
> 15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on

> race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

Nobody can take away your rights. However, in order to maintain your rights, you must know them.

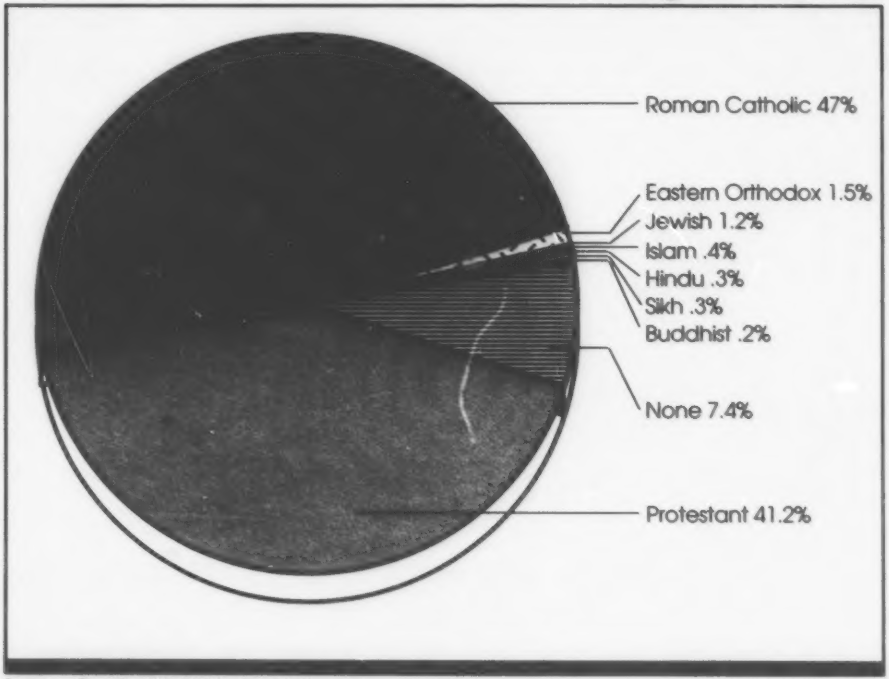
## An historical note ...

Canada is a country whose origins are almost exclusively in law and process, as opposed to revolution. The rule of law has always been a primary concern to Canadians, even in the earliest days of settlement by Europeans. As the country expanded west and north, police preceeded the settlers and duly constituted justice was meted out by travelling judges.

Although there have been religious tensions in the past, Canada has solved them in the tradition of the separation of church and state. There is no official religion in Canada, and specific guarantees in the Constitution allow freedom of faith and conscience. Canada's history contains a strong tradition of Christianity. The Roman Catholic Church continues to have the largest number of adherents.

[Refer to desk-top kit, Religions of Canada.]

## Religions of Canada



SOURCE: Canadian World Almanac, 1990

See also Part 4 Chapter 4, Religion and Belief

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

The separation of church and state is sometimes a difficult concept for newcomers from countries where this is not the custom. Essentially, it means that the law is a different kind of instrument from the morals and customs of any one religion. The law in Canada upholds rights, prohibits some actions and demands certain standards of behaviour in order to maintain *peace, order and good government* — words of great constitutional significance in Canadian history.

Law is seen as a means of upholding individual rights while at the same time ensuring the safety and continuity of society as a whole.

The law in Canada is therefore constantly attempting to balance individual and group rights. This means that for every right, there is a corresponding responsibility.

- Seat belt legislation is a good example of recently-enacted Canadian laws that exemplify the balance of individual rights with the good of society. Since there is convincing evidence that seat belts save lives, they are mandatory throughout Canada for the good of the population at large. The Supreme Court of Canada, Canada's highest court of law, decided that the small limitation of individual liberty by making seat belts mandatory was balanced by the good of society as a whole.

- Another example of the same principle is legislation making crash-helmets mandatory for motorcycle drivers.

- A further example is legislation that makes it illegal to drive a motor vehicle with more than .08 blood alcohol level (approximately

> two drinks taken in less than two hours). If you are stopped, you must submit to a "breathalyzer" test, which registers the quantity of alcohol in your system. If your test registers over .08, *independent of your behaviour, how you feel, or what you have drunk,* you will be charged with impaired driving.

Discussions of rights can often be acrimonious if they do not take into account the need for judgement when two rights come into conflict. Newcomers need to know that the Supreme Court of Canada has the function of resolving such Charter Rights issues.

## You and the state

Nobody can enter your home without your permission *unless* they *both* identify themselves as peace (ie: police, taxation) officers, *and also* show you a warrant which specifically names *either* you *or* your home.

You cannot be arrested unless on a specific charge, and you cannot be detained for more than 24 hours without being charged and brought before a judge.

You may not be held incommunicado. That is, if you are arrested, you must be given the opportunity to make at least one telephone call to tell your lawyer (or some person chosen by you) where you are and what you have been charged with.

The foregoing rights are stated in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in articles 8, 9 and 10 as follows:

> 8. Everyone has the right to be secure against unreasonable search or seizure.
>
> 9. Everyone has the right not to be arbitrarily detained or imprisoned.
>
> 10. Everyone has the right on arrest or detention
> (a) to be informed promptly of the reasons therefor;
> (b) to retain and instruct counsel without delay and to be informed of that right; and
> (c) to have the validity of the detention determined by way of *habeas corpus* and to be released if the detention is not lawful.

If you are arrested and charged with a crime, you may be assisted by a lawyer, and if you can show by certain criteria that you cannot afford a lawyer, a government-funded service called Legal Aid will supply you with a lawyer.

The relevant rights if you are arrested are stated in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in articles 11 and 12 as follows:

11. Any person charged with an offence has the right

(a) to be informed without unreasonable delay of the specific offence;

(b) to be tried within a reasonable time;

(c) not to be compelled to be a witness in proceedings against that person in respect of the offence;

(d) to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law in a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal;

(e) not to be denied reasonable bail without just cause;

(f) except in the case of an offence under military law tried before a military tribunal, to the benefit of trial by jury where the maximum punishment for the offence is imprisonment for five years or a more severe punishment;

(g) not to be found guilty on account of any act or omission unless, at the time of the act or omission, it constituted an offence under Canadian or international law or was criminal according to the general principles of law recognized by the community of nations;

(h) if finally acquitted of the offence, not to be tried for it again and, if finally found guilty and punished for the offence, not to be tried or punished for it again; and

(i) if found guilty of the offence and if the punishment for the offence has been varied between the time of commission and the time of sentencing, to the benefit of the lesser punishment.

12. Everyone has the right not to be subjected to any cruel or unusual treatment or punishment.

*These basic rights under the Charter apply to newcomers in Canada just as much as they do to all Canadian citizens.*

You may waive your rights either deliberately or by not knowing them. For example, *you may* accept a wage less than the minimum wage, but *you do not have to*. For another example, *you may* let a police officer who does not have a warrant into your home, but *you do not have to*.

In Canada, all laws are promulgated; that is, there are no "secret" laws. If you are accused of committing an offence under the law, ignorance is not an excuse. It is not a defence to claim that you did not know you were breaking the law.

> *The excuse, "I am a newcomer," is NOT acceptable.*

Knowing the law is your responsibility. Everyone lives in the context of laws that affect what you may, must and must not do. Therefore, knowing your rights puts you in control of your life.

## Dealing with the police

*How would you interact with a police officer in your country?*

You can expect police officers to interact with you in a formal, impersonal manner. They may be either men or women. Bribery or anything that appears to hint at it is particularly offensive to most Canadians, and is sternly punished by the law.

Many interactions with police take place under conditions of some stress. You can interact best with a Canadian police officer if you remember the following:

- Accept the police officer's authority — do as he or she says — within the framework of your rights (see above).
- Be respectful, but do not cringe. Meet the officer's eyes directly. This will be understood as a sign of being direct and truthful, whereas looking at the ground or otherwise avoiding eye contact may be misunderstood as being "untrustworthy," "shifty-eyed," or "concealing something."
- Stick to facts about what has happened or is happening, rather than feelings. Canadian law is much more concerned with what can be proved than with how people feel about it.
- You should not remain silent about what you think or believe. However, do not accuse anyone recklessly, because you may later be asked to prove what you have said. (Generally speaking, to prove something, you need to show physical evidence — objects, injuries — or bring witnesses — someone who actually saw what you experienced and is willing to give an account of what happened, under oath.)
- You may request an interpreter to help you understand and speak in court. This is guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in article 14, as follows:

> 14. A party or witness in any proceedings who does not understand or speak the language in which the proceedings are conducted or who is deaf has the right to the assistance of an interpreter.

*How would you interact with a public official in your country?*

You can expect public officials to interact with you in a civil, impersonal manner. Again, bribery or anything that appears to hint at it, is offensive to most Canadians, and is sternly punishable by the law.

Do not mistake pleasantness for personal feelings, nor formality for dislike. Canadian public officials are professionally trained to administer laws and regulations in like manner to all. When dealing with public officials, it is necessary to remember that they follow rules, rather than make them.

## You and other citizens

*Even before you become a Canadian citizen,* you enjoy the protection of laws that ensure fair economic practices; specifically, that prohibit discrimination against you because of race, religion or sex.

Everyone is protected by the law against physical harm and abuse.

This protection includes all people: men, women and children.

Law dealing with the obligations of people to each other as expressed in business contracts, promises and agreements, is *not* the same throughout

Canada. Quebec maintains the Civil Code for much of its civil law, whereas in the rest of Canadian civil law is based on case law, which extrapolates from previous judgements, called "precedent."

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

Both heterosexual and homosexual relationships between consenting adults are considered matters of private morality in Canada, as opposed to public law.

An adult is a person 18 years or over. Even if a person over 14 and less than 18 has consented to sexual activity, the law says that in some cases that consent is not legally acceptable. Young people over 14 and less than 18 can consent to sexual activity, but that consent is not legally acceptable if one of them holds a position of authority — for example, a babysitter. It is not a defence for anyone to say that the young person seemed older. The accused must prove that he or she took all reasonable steps to find out the young person's age. Children under 12 can NEVER give legal consent to sexual activity.

Protection against physical harm and abuse extends to behaviour within the family in the privacy of their home. The abuse of wives and children by their husbands or other members of their families is a crime.

Some newcomers have difficulty recognizing that what they may think of as corrective disciplining of the members of their families may in Canada be seen as abuse, which is a crime.

A distinction should be drawn between "abuse" and "spanking." Generally speaking, most people and courts understand that to spank is to strike with the open hand two or three times. Spanking a child for so long or so hard as to raise bruises or welts, or the use of anything other than an open hand is deeply objectionable to most Canadians.

- Canadian authorities have shown a willingness to intervene, and even separate children from their parents when it can be shown that the children have been physically or psychologically harmed.

- Psychological abuse is more difficult to define and prove; however, children who have been subjected to abuse such as being locked in a closet or otherwise terrified or humiliated have been legally separated from their parents.

The question of abuse is over and above parents' legal obligation to provide their children with "the necessities of life" — food, shelter, clothing, education.

Women who are abused by their husbands need not continue to suffer. They can obtain the protection of the law, and can find shelter and assistance for themselves and their children if they leave an abusive situation. Women who find themselves being physically or psychologically abused should find support and take action. Understanding and advice can be found by calling the local "crisis"or "distress" centre listed in most telephone directories.

- Canada has strongly-worded criminal laws forbidding assault on another person. Canadian authorities treat any physical assault on a wife in the same way as an assault upon any other person.

- Psychological abuse, though more difficult to define and prove, is a reason for women being granted legal protection from their husbands.

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See also Part 3, Chapter 3, Women's, Children's and Senior Citizens' Rights, particularly the sections Women and Children

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## Social Security

In addition to physical safety, the law protects individual economic safety.

The two most obvious aspects of Canada's social security system are the Canadian National Health Insurance Program, called "medicare" — discussed in Part 2 Chapter 4, "Health," and Income Security Programs.

Social assistance provides the minimum resources necessary to meet basic needs. Among the Income Security programs available to Canadians are benefits in the form of:

- Monthly pension payments and specific taxation benefits to senior citizens (people 65 and over);

- Monthly family allowance payments to the custodial parent of children under 18 (known as "the baby bonus");
- Tax credits for families with children;
- Unemployment insurance payments up to a portion of your salary should you become unemployed after you have been employed and made contributions to the Unemployment Insurance Fund for weeks;
- "Worker's compensation and income support," or disability pension payments to people who can no longer work;
- Specific programs directed to newcomers.

Some newcomers to Canada misunderstand the nature and purpose of welfare — that is, the payments and services people can receive from the government if they lack sufficient means to support themselves and their dependents. Welfare programs are society's "safety net," designed to protect people from distress and help them through difficulties. The government does not owe anyone a living, and welfare is not a way to escape productive contribution to society. Canadians respect people who use social programs only when necessary; they do not respect people who abuse wefare by "freeloading" on the social programs.

At first glance, it may appear that to rely exclusively on welfare might provide an adequate living; however, the reality is that life at the minimum standard of living is neither easy nor desirable. Moreover, the way back from welfare to gainful employment is difficult, particularly because of the debilitating psychological effects of being one of the jobless in a society that tends to measure people in terms of what they do.

A consequence is the newcomer's need to balance between taking *a* job rather than remaining unemployed indefinitely or for an extended period of time. Every individual on the job market, both newcomer and Canadian, must balance the need to work with the need to have a fulfilling job. Some compromise is usually necessary on a temporary basis.

Taking a less-than-perfect job is a temporary compromise which allows people to improve their situation while they are earning their own living. Most of the time, to have a job makes people more appealing to a prospective employer. Moreover, though people do not have to take the first job offered to them, if they repeatedly turn down jobs or refuse to compete seriously for jobs suggested to by the government employment services of the Department of Employment and Immigration (called "Canada Employment Centres") they put themselves in danger of losing their benefits.

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See also Part 2 Chapter 4, Health

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## The corollary of government services — taxes

The many social services from government in Canada seem at first glance to be "free." In fact, they are a cost to every Canadian, in that they are paid for by taxes.

Newcomers use social services no more — and possibly even *less* — than people born in Canada. However, the untrue perception exists in the minds of many Canadians that newcomers "use up" social services. This is a myth that is in everyone's interest to discard.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Canadians have a high respect for their police officers. They acknowledge that there are better and worse police officers, but they rely on the justice system to be fair. People coming from countries in which arbitrary action by police officers is a common event may have difficulty with the basic Canadian concept of respect for the law and police officers. Newcomers may create problems for themselves by concealing or failing to report crime out of inappropriate ethnic solidarity. Their fear of police is understandable, but it is destructive of their own lives and safety, as well as those of their children and families. In general, Canadians believe that this kind of fearful and secretive behaviour leads to a breakdown of the rule of law that is so important to Canadian society.

It is essential that people enjoy a basic, mutual trust of each other as they live together in society.

Sadly, there have been instances when the police have not been, or not appeared to be fair to particular ethnic or national groups. Most Canadians initially have difficulty believing that there have been abuses of authority, but when they are persuaded that there has been an injustice, they are concerned that it should not recur. The most successful strategy for lasting and beneficial changes in the relationship between people and police officers is for there to be people from different races and national origins both on the police forces, and on police commissions that oversee their work.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about authority and how to react to it. Correct misperceptions about the nature of the power held by public servants.

- Role play appropriate interaction with police officers and government employees. Emphasize eye contact, directness, statements of fact rather than emotions. Emphasize candid behaviour, firmness on matters of right. Emphasize appropriate behaviour by Canadian standards, particularly concentrating on over-passivity or over-demonstrativeness .

- Seek suggestions about what should be done in situations involving human rights. Tell the following story slowly twice. (Substitute names appropriate to the countries of origin of the class members.) Ask questions and respond to questions to ensure that everyone agrees on the facts.

*A male employee at the factory where Jane works has stroked or patted her on several occasions. At first, she thought it was an accident, and said nothing. Each time, the touching has been more intimate. She is deeply offended, but has told nobody. She is unmarried, living with her family. What should she do?* Possible Responses. Have the students rank the following possibilities in order, and then discuss their preferences.

1. *Have her brother come to work with her and fight with the employee.*
2. *Go to her supervisor, taking with her a fellow-employee who witnessed the behaviour, and request that the man be told to stop.*
3. *Resign from her job.*
4. *Ignore the situation.*

5. *Reason privately with the employee, telling him that he is insulting her.*
6. *Report the incident to the police.*
7. *Ask her brother to speak on her behalf to her employer.*
8. *Other.*

The ensuing discussion among the students will likely involve them asking what a woman in Canada would/should do, what difficulties she might encounter, what success she should expect. It will also likely touch on the limits of acceptable behaviour, safety of the person, attitudes toward women. Language functions include: making a complaint, giving evidence, dealing with hostility, dealing with authority.

- Discuss and then have students role play telephoning the police to report a burglary or a car accident. Have the rest of the class critique the performance, and correct misunderstandings as well as language flaws.

- Review the nature of an emergency and how to report it, then have each member of the class respond immediately to a different emergency situation, giving the necessary information over the telephone. (The nature of the emergency, who is involved, how many people, its severity, the address from which the call is coming, the telephone number from which the person is speaking, the speaker's name.)

- Prepare a list of legal and illegal actions, and present them as a true-false game, allowing for discussion of each case. (For example: "It is legal for you to shoot a burglar in your house." "It is legal for a man to discipline his wife with a stick smaller than the thickness of his thumb." "It is legal to drink beer but not spirits while driving a car," etc.)

- Witness/victim role-play game: Have two students act out a mugging. Ask the "victim" to identify the "assailant." Question the class as witnesses, insisting on facts. Use a police-style identification: sex, height, weight, racial group (Caucasian, Asian, African), clothing, hair, identifying marks, etc.

# Part 2 Chapter 4 **Health**

## Core Concepts

Individual, family and societal health are important to Canadians. They believe in taking responsibility for both personal health and the health of society.

The Canadian National Health Insurance Program, better known as "medicare" ensures that Canadians do not have to pay the cost of most hospital and medical services.

## Something to look forward to ...

In Canada, you need not fear the economic consequences of accident or ill health. With some exceptions, medical services are paid for by taxes.

> *Remember: You must re-register if you move from one province to another.*

In many of the larger urban hospitals in Canada there are translators and interpreters to help newcomers. However, everyone should master a "survival level" of language to deal with medical emergencies.

## Medical services

*In your country, what medical services are paid for by the government?*

In Canada, most medical services are paid for by the federal and provincial governments. (You must be registered with the provincial health department and have an official card with a number that identifies you.)

Most dental services are *not* covered by medicare unless they are life-threatening and require hospital treatment. Some companies offer dental programs as part of their employee benefit packages.

*What kind of medical services are in general use in your country?*

Primary medical services in Canada follow the Western medical tradition. Other medical approaches, such as the many techniques and remedies of Chinese and Indian medicine, (ie: acupressure, acupuncture, herbal remedies) are being increasingly acknowledged in Canada. They are called "alternative medicine," and are not paid for by the government.

*In your country, to what extent are medical services licenced and controlled by government?*

In Canada, most medicines are strictly controlled and licenced. Drugs, with the exception of non-prescription drugs (such as Aspirin, Contac C, Vicks, etc.) may not be sold except by licenced pharmacists.

Only a licenced medical practitioner (a doctor) may practice medicine in Canada, and there are laws that prohibit "practicing medicine without a licence."

> There are also limited medical licences for people qualified to practice specialized forms of medicine. For example, doctors of chiropractic medicine, whose licence does not include the right to prescribe drugs, or podiatrists whose licence limits them to treating ailments of the feet.

A pharmacist can advise about cold medicines or other non-prescription drugs and can explain how and when you should take prescription drugs.

*How do you know who to trust for medical advice in your country?*

In Canada, the term "doctor" is used not only for medical doctors but also as a qualification for advanced studies in a great number of academic fields. This can be confusing in conversation. However, only qualified medical practitioners may use the letters "MD" and display a licence to practice medicine (or some aspect of medicine) in their offices.

Medicare only pays for specific medical services that are offered by licenced medical practitioners. Medical services that are wholly or partially paid for by medicare include chiropractic, physiotherapy, psychiatry and such services as massage and physiotherapy, but only when prescribed by a doctor.

*Where would you go for EMERGENCY medical services in your country?*

In Canada, if you are suddenly ill or injured, you can and should go immediately to the emergency department of the nearest hospital. In serious emergencies (life-threatening situations where you cannot get to help by yourself) you can obtain help by calling the emergency telephone number (in many Canadian cities, 9-1-1, otherwise, "0" for operator) and asking for an ambulance, which will take you to the nearest hospital.

*In your country, where would you go for medical services and advice?*

The primary source of medical services and advice in Canada are doctors who are qualified by years of study at a school of medicine, recognized by the Canadian College of Physicians and Surgeons (a professional body), and licenced by the province in which he or she works. Only such a doctor may treat you or advise you to take prescription drugs dispensed by a licenced pharmacist — as opposed to patent drugs that you can purchase "over the counter" at any pharmacy, which is known in Canada as a "drug store."

*Would you expect a doctor to be a man?*

A Canadian doctor might be either a man or a woman. The medical profession in Canada still has more men than women doctors; however, among younger doctors there are approximately as many women as men. Most Canadians choose a "family doctor" — as opposed to a doctor who specializes in some aspect of medicine such as obstetrics and gynaecology, surgery, neuro-surgery, etc. — so that in an emergency there is a doctor who knows them and their medical history. It is possible to choose either a male or female family doctor, and you may change doctors if you wish, or ask your doctor for a "second opinion" from another doctor, particularly before having an operation.

*In your country, how would you choose a doctor?*

In Canada, most people choose a "family doctor," in advance of any medical problem, so that in an emergency, the doctor knows their basic medical history. They choose their doctor by asking advice from their friends, co-workers, or a person such as a school nurse or social worker. Telephone books usually list the names of doctors and their specialties, sometimes adding the languages in which they are proficient. To choose a family doctor, people usually prefer one whose office is not too far away from their home, or who is attached to a local hospital, or who participates in a clinic composed of several doctors. Doctors limit the number of patients they accept, so it may not be possible to have the first doctor you call take you as a patient. However, the doctor or his secretary can usually advise you of a doctor nearby who is accepting new patients. The family doctor will want to know about previous health problems, operations, allergies, immunization, etc., so that he or she can respond knowledgeably to any future problems.

*In your country, are there other sources of medical advice to which you might turn?*

Medicine that uses herbs and other naturally-occurring substances, or medical practices such as acupuncture are increasingly gaining respect in Canada. However, the Western scientific medical model is the most accepted approach to health and sickness, and other approaches are not always recognized by many Canadian doctors.

Again, it is advisable to ensure that whoever offers treatment or medicine has recognizable, trustworthy credentials.

Herbalists, "traditional medicine," and all medical advice or treatment not specifically recognized and licenced by the government are NOT covered by medicare.

*How extensive are health precautions and laws in your country?*

In Canada, public health is an important concern at all levels of government. Public health laws affect the standards of purity and cleanliness of the food you buy, the way in which restaurants and food stores are maintained, and many other aspects of community life.

Children in Canada are routinely protected by universal inoculation against diphtheria, polio, tetanus and other communicable diseases.

> *In order for a child to be admitted to school, the parents must show an immunization card that proves the child's inoculations are up to date.*

This is the parents' responsibility.

Canada has successfully reduced the risk of contracting a number of once-prevalent diseases, largely as a result of high standards of public health. Polio, diphtheria, mumps, measles and chicken pox which two generations ago claimed many lives, have been either eliminated from Canada, or reduced to the status of relatively minor childhood diseases.

*In your country, is health a subject taught in school?*

In Canada, health is a subject taught in school. Children are taught cleanliness, nutrition, human biology including reproduction, all from a scientific and non-religious point of view.

School children are routinely given eye a[illegible]ental examinations, called "checkups." Parents are informed if the nurse or doctor finds a medical problem. This is *not* seen as bringing shame to the family, but rather as helpful guidance and an aspect of going to a school. Such difficulties as mild and correctable eyesight or slightly defective hearing are frequently not noticed by even the most careful parents until their children go to school and have their abilities compared professionally with those of children of their own age.

These services are aspects of what is known as "preventive medicine," or "public health" — the preservation of a high standard of health in order to combat the spread of disease.

*Are there clinics in your country for families and children?*

The availability of pre-natal and post-natal instruction for mothers, and regular medical checkups for children and adults alike have been important ways in which Canada has become a healthier country. Although there is increasing pressure for licenced midwives to supervise births in the home, almost all births in Canada take place in hospitals.

*Does your country have a policy or plan to deal with AIDS?*

In common with many other countries, Canada has recognized the threat of AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). This fatal disease spreads through the exchange of blood or semen. It is not restricted to any social, ethnic, sexual preference or any other classification of society. As the result of a widespread communication effort through advertising, "hot line" telephone services, articles and other media, Canadians are now generally aware of the risks of having sex with different sexual partners without using a condom.

*What is the social and cultural approach of your country towards mental illness?*

Mental illness is as much a medical problem as sickness or injury. Stress, psychological trauma, severe emotional problems are generally acknowledged as difficulties requiring professional treatment. Although there are still people who regard mental illness with superstition and prejudice, in the main, Canadians are aware that many people need help to deal with their lives, and most people feel no shame in accepting professional psychological help. Nonetheless, people are frequently reticent about mentioning their own or their family members' psychological problems, even though statistics show that most people at some time in their lives seek such help.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

For some newcomers from countries with different approaches to health, medicare is a difficult concept, as is the idea of public health and the right of society to protect itself from disease. Misunderstandings and problems arise when newcomers mistake requests to conform to Canadian standards of public hygiene as personal attacks or a slur on their families or race. This is particularly the case when psychological or mental illness is concerned.

> *There is no need to conceal ill health, disease or any medical condition. Medicare exists to ensure everyone's health.*

Occasionally, newcomers are under the misapprehension that their Permanent Resident status or even Citizenship may be prejudiced if they have a medical condition that makes it necessary for them to use medicare services. This fear is groundless. In fact, they have an obligation to seek medical help if they or their families are ill, particularly if they have some illness that could be transmitted to others. Children with infectious diseases should be kept at home rather than sending them to school where they may infect others.

## Discussion suggestions

- Encourage conversations about children's and adults' illness and what might be done about them.

- Use the children's game "Simon Says" to teach the parts of the body.

- Focus on words for illness, aches, fevers, and injuries to parts of the body. Role-play a visit to the doctor. A review of more intimate body parts might necessitate segregating the men and women, and having a teacher of the same sex address the respective groups. This may be necessary in dealing with people from countries with strong body-modesty taboos or prohibitions about (especially women) talking about reproductive and other bodily functions. Teachers who may disapprove of the sexual politics of these countries should remember that the primary objective is to provide basic language skills, and to ensure that nobody is unable to talk to a physician because he or she lacks the necessary basic vocabulary. A secondary objective may be to communicate a "standard Canadian" level of body modesty and willingness to speak to a doctor about medical problems. For this to be successful, considerable tact and objectivity is necessary.

- Have students prepare an account of their own medical histories, and then coach them on how to fill in a medical history form.

- Discuss folk and herbal remedies used and/or believed by Canadians, for example: chicken soup for a cold, a sock around the neck for sore throat, etc.

- Discuss stress — particularly culture shock — and how to recognize and deal with it.

- Hold a debate on the pros and cons of a national health care system. This can lead naturally into a discussion of the use and abuse of the system.

- Hold a debate about whether people should be allowed to smoke wherever they wish. Statistics and authoritative statements by doctors and researchers provide an opportunity to practice reported speech.

- Ask participants to list all the poisonous substances that might be in a home. Bring real bottles and cans marked with the symbols for poison, explosives, flammables, corrosives, etc., that they might see in Canada.

# Part 2 Chapter 5 **Canadian Government: An Introduction**

## Core Concepts

Canada is a federation of ten provinces and two territories.

There are three levels of government: federal, provincial and municipal.

There is a constitutional separation of powers between the provinces and the federal government that is not fully resolved.

## Something to look forward to...

To participate in a country that is peacefully undergoing change within the lifetimes of its citizens.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

Canada is a stable country. The Canadian dollar is actively traded and strong on international currency markets. It is one of the "G7" or Group of Seven nations, the leading industrialized nations. Its internal peace and external relations are not jeopardized by its evolutionary changes.

## Canadian Internal Jurisdictions

*Do you have any administrative or political units in addition to the government of the country as a whole, and the operation of cities or towns?*

Canada has 10 provinces and two territories.

The provinces are (from west to east): British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland.

The territories are the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

See also Part 1 Chapter 1, Geography

*How did your country come together into its present form?*

Before the European explorers and settlers came to North America in the sixteenth century, the First Peoples — the Indians and Inuit — had a developed civilization and a system of government based on tribal principles. Their custom of seeking consensus gave the Indian and Inuit peoples a solidarity and sense of purpose that nearly three hundred years later is now enjoying a renaissance, as the First Peoples claim their unique place in Canada.

The evolution of Canada is a story of the interaction between English- and French-speaking cultures, and also of a steady expansion west and northward until Canada became the second largest country in area in the world (after the USSR).

The two founding European peoples, the British and the French, came to what is now Canada in the seventeenth century. Newfoundland, the oldest of all British colonies, remained separate from the rest of the continent until it joined Canada in 1949. The French settled mainly in Lower Canada (which is now Québec) whereas English-speaking people who were predominantly of British origin settled in Upper Canada (now Ontario) as well as the east coast colonies, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. New Brunswick alone of the provinces included roughly equal numbers of French and English. Because it was accessible only by sea, the west coast colony, British Columbia, developed independently from all the other colonies until Confederation, and the transcontinental railroad.

The two major partners in what was to be Canada each brought a language, a system of government, a set of laws and a cultural heritage. Initially, the French- and English-speaking peoples were at odds as a result of the war between England and France that was waged not only in Europe, but also throughout the colonies of these two powers all around the world.

The Peace of Paris ended the British-French wars in 1763. The two largest colonies then called Upper and Lower Canada, continued to concentrate political power in the hands of relatively small minority groups that were disparagingly called the "Family Compact" in English-speaking Canada, and the "Château Clique" in French-speaking Canada. In 1837, two short-lived popular rebellions broke out, the one in Upper Canada demanding reforms, the one in Lower Canada seeking a stronger voice for the French majority in political and economic affairs. In 1839, the English nobleman Lord Durham presented a report to the British government on the situation in both colonies, based on his observations during a six-month visit. He recommended "responsible government" as opposed to the colonial administrative government that was then in force; and also the union of the two colonies so that the

French would be gradually assimilated and disappear. The first recommendation for the Act of Union was implemented in 1840, but the second was rejected. Instead, Upper and Lower Canada were kept separate, the English and the French continued to hold their respective languages, laws and customs. British Common Law came into use by both colonies, and Québec kept the *Code Napoléon* — French Civil Law.

*Did your country expand from its original size at founding?*

Unlike many nations that have expanded their borders at the cost of other countries, Canada fought no wars as it grew in size. First, it was joined by other pre-existing North American colonies; then it expanded into the midwest and north, adding provinces as the population of newcomers warranted.

In 1867, Upper Canada as Ontario and Lower Canada as Quebec joined Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to federate into a single unit called Canada. Though many men were involved in this momentous step, none were more important than Sir John A. Macdonald, architect of Confederation and first prime minister of Canada and Sir George-Étienne Cartier. The British North America Act, known as the BNA Act, was the Act of the British parliament that brought the federation about, providing Canada with its constitution for more than a century.

Thereafter, Canada expanded swiftly northward and westward, adding Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territories — two enormous tracts of land bigger than all of Europe. The next province to be created was Manitoba in

1870, then the colony of British Columbia joined in 1871. Prince Edward Island became part of Canada in 1873, and the Yukon was created out of the Northwest Territories in 1898. In 1905, Saskatchewan and Alberta were added. In 1949, Newfoundland, the oldest colony in the British Commonwealth, joined Canada.

*What were the consequences of your country's expansion?*

Canadian expansion was fuelled by immigration. Successive waves of peoples joined the growing land. Some came to settle and farm, often fleeing famine, economic or religious persecution in their country of origin. Some came to work on the railroads that linked the provinces together. Each national or ethnic group encountered a curious blend of acceptance and intolerance until they found their place in what has been called the Canadian mosaic of peoples and cultures. On the one hand, there was a need for people; on the other, there were the ethnocentric attitudes of those who felt that because they had arrived earlier, they were entitled to exclusively retain political power forever. Over time, more and more newcomers to Canada have taken active roles in politics, business and government. If one simply compares names in lists of politicians, business people and government employees at about the time of Confederation in 1867 with comparable lists almost a century and quarter later, the increasingly multicultural nature of modern Canada becomes evident.

*How is your country governed?*

## Federal Government

Canada is a parliamentary democracy. It has a national Parliament, divided into two chambers: The House of Commons, which is elected by all Canadian citizens over the age of 18; and The Senate, which is an appointed body with limited powers.

A general election is called at least every five years, and the leader of the party with the greatest number of elected members becomes Prime Minister. The elected members of the other parties form "the loyal opposition," the party with the second-largest number of seats being called "the official opposition." The concept of the "loyal opposition" is crucial to understanding that while there may be disagreement among Canadians about policies, ways and means, all members of parliament remain loyal to the country and the Governor General is the symbolic head of state, representing the Queen of Canada.

Unlike the United States of America, and other republics that have an elected president as head of state, Canada separates the role of political leader from the symbolic functions of a head of state. The Prime Minister wields power, but does not own it: the Governor General owns power but does not exercise it. This paradoxical arrangement is characteristic of the Commonwealth countries' relationship to Queen Elizabeth II, who reigns but does not rule; as opposed to her prime ministers who rule but do not reign. This makes it possible for a Canadian to be against the policies of a particular government while still being completely loyal to the country and wholly in favour of government itself.

Prime Ministers appoint advisors from their party in the House of Commons and The Senate. These advisors are called "ministers," who together make up "The Cabinet." Each of the cabinet ministers is responsible for a department of government, such as Finance, Health, Employment and Immigration, and so on. Each department is composed of public servants who are non-partisan professional bureaucrats.

Working within this organizational structure, the government sets about making laws that will carry out the policies for which it was chosen by the electorate.

The Supreme Court of Canada consists of nine appointed judges who ensure that laws are constitutionally valid. They interpret the Canadian Constitution, particularly the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

See also Part 5 Chapter 3, Politics

## Canada's Constitution

Canada's constitution until 1982 was The British North America Act of 1867, (known as the BNA Act). It was an act of the British parliament, and could only be interpreted or amended in Britain. Over more than a century, Canada moved gradually towards taking control of its own constitution. This was a process complicated by the fact that Quebec was and is a special case among the provinces, in that its language, civil law and overall culture are both different from, and at the same time an important contribution to the rest of Canada.

In 1982, the Constitution Act patriated the Canadian constitution, making it a document that can be interpreted and amended in Canada, without the approval of Great Britain (as was the case of the BNA Act). Unfortunately, Quebec was not a signatory to that 1982 agreement. This necessitated a round of negotiations towards what was called the Meech Lake Accord, which was to have added Quebec's signature to the Constitution. Since the failure of that Accord in 1990, the process of negotiating the details of the relationship between Québec and the rest of Canada is still far from complete.

Because change to the Constitution can only come with the approval of the federal government and the provinces, and since the provinces have different and sometimes conflicting aspirations, this process is fraught with political difficulty. The key player among the provinces is Quebec, because of its special historical, legal, linguistic and cultural heritage. However, the tensions between English- and French-speaking Canada are not the only issues at stake. The First Peoples of Canada — the Inuit and Indians — have recently found their voice to demand recognition as aboriginal peoples with important land claims and cultural traditions that they feel are ignored by the existing Constitution. Other groups representing regional, linguistic, cultural and ethnic points of view, as well as women's organizations have all demanded that they be heard in the Constitutional process, and that their rights be expressly protected.

See also Part 5 Chapter 3, Politics

## Provincial and Territorial Governments

Each of the ten provinces has a parliament (called the Legislature in all provinces save Quebec, which calls its house the National Assembly or *Assemblée nationale*. These houses function similarly to the House of Commons of Canada.

The Yukon and Northwest Territories both have elected legislative assemblies with somewhat fewer powers than provinces.

## Division of Powers

The division of powers between the federal and the provincial governments has been and still is a complex issue. Broadly speaking, at Confederation it was expected that the federal government would handle all national issues such as defence, the post office, international relations and so on. The provinces, on the other hand, were to control education, civil law and the administration of justice. The Fathers of Confederation saw that the USA had fought a civil war in part over the issue of the power of their federal government. Accordingly, Canada began with a strong central government. In the second half of the twentieth century, the provinces gradually increased their power to became important partners in Confederation. With this came more and more sharing of responsibilities with the federal government. At the same time, the provinces' tax base grew in some cases and declined in others, causing the federal government to take on the task of equalizing the financial resources among the provinces.

## Municipal Government

Municipal government of cities, towns and villages is the third level of government in Canada, subject to the laws of both the federal and provincial levels. Municipal government is concerned with schools, water, sewer, garbage collection, transit and fire protection services. Larger towns and cities have their own police forces. On the one hand, municipal government is seen as the "junior" level, restricted to passing by-laws (ie: city laws) about such matters as parking. On the other, the municipalities that together make up the cities of Toronto's "metro" government (an amalgam of municipalities) include more people than live in all three Maritime Provinces. As Canada's population increasingly concentrates in cities, municipal government becomes more and more important. Generally speaking, the counsellors, aldermen, school board members, mayors and other elected positions in municipalities are not formally associated with a political party.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Dealing with Canadian governments at all three levels can cause problems for newcomers who have experienced oppressive regimes or lived in countries in which government is not friendly to the average citizen. On the one hand, some newcomers shrink from any dealings whatsoever with all forms of government, thereby forgoing rights and opportunities. On the other, some newcomers misperceive government in Canada as a source of free goods and services.

Established Canadians view government as theirs, that is, as a servant rather than a master. They also respect the authority wielded by government, and are strongly critical of bribery and corruption. Though not all eligible voters exercise their franchise in elections, most Canadians also see their right to vote as a democratic duty.

Sometimes, newcomers are approached by people who offer to get "special favours" from government authorities. People who come from countries in which favours are a way of life often have difficulty with Canadians' concern that government officials should be neutral and fair. Bribery, corruption and the use of public office for personal gain are prohibited in Canada by very strict laws supported by a strong force of public opinion. Newcomers should gravely mistrust people who offer "special political favours."

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about government and how to interact with it. Emphasize the Canadian concept of democratic government and its implications.

- Role play interactions with a government official in Canada — a Customs or an Immigration officer, etc.

- Organize a debate which will both capture parliamentary process and address an aspect of Canadian democracy. For example, "Resolved that government censorship of news is sometimes necessary," or "Resolved that illegal immigrants forfeit their human rights." Conclude with a clear statement of Canadian policy.

# PART THREE

# LOVE AND SOCIAL NEEDS

## Shared Symbols of Canada 4

The **loon** is the bird that appears on the reverse of the one dollar coin. Canadians often call the coin "a loonie."

Loons are large, black-and-white water birds, almost as big as geese. They can be found on wilderness lakes, usually one pair to each lake, throughout most of Canada, particularly in the northern parts of Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and the Territories. Loons are fish-eating birds; they are not hunted or eaten. Loons mate for life; they return year after year to the same lake after wintering in South America. Loons share housekeeping duties: both males and females take turns hatching one-to-three eggs each year. Loons have a unique repertoire of loud whooping cries that for many Canadians is an essential part of visiting the wilderness.

# Part 3 Chapter 1 **Public Behaviour: Meeting People, Visiting**

## Core Concept

Canada is tolerant of a wide range of public behaviour. Nonetheless, there are well-established standards of acceptable social interaction. Although the details may vary from region to region and by socio-economic group, the conventions of politeness are remarkably consistent throughout Canada.

## Something to look forward to ...

Because Canada is a multicultural country, an enjoyable aspect of being Canadian is sharing other people's customs. Newcomers should never be ashamed of their own conventions of politeness, but rather learn which of them should be modified, and which will be accepted as marks of mutual respect by their new Canadian friends.

## Exchanging Greetings

*Do people in your country exchange greetings the words of which are not to be taken literally?*

Most Canadians greet each other verbally by saying, "Hello, how are you?" to which the response is "Fine, thank you." This exchange is *not* an enquiry into health, but rather a social exchange that is not to be taken literally.

*How do people meet and greet each other in public in your country?*

As a multicultural country, Canada accepts the greetings of its many peoples. A wide variety of customs can be seen in public areas such as airports, bus and train stations. However, the customs of international Western business provide a standard that is adhered to by most Canadians.

In the context of business, men and women usually shake hands on meeting for the first time. (A handshake is exchanged at forearm distance, with a firm grasp and a slight movement up and down.) In business, people meeting each other in public may shake hands if they do not see each other routinely. Women in business greeting close female business associates who are also friends may embrace formally and kiss on the cheek.

Men may formally embrace old friends or family, but almost never kiss other men in public. Both men and women embrace and kiss lightly when meeting old friends or family. Women meeting women may embrace formally and kiss on the cheek.

Men and women meeting formally in a social context for the first time usually shake hands; however, under informal circumstances — in a bar, at a party, etc. — most younger people will not shake hands, but instead will exchange greetings, such as "Hi!" or "How are you?" Old friends may embrace formally and kiss on the cheek, as do family members.

A light kiss on or near the cheek is common between men and women. Close friends of the opposite sex may kiss lightly and quickly on the lips without causing offence when meeting or parting. Romantic or passionate kissing is considered a private act. A kiss on the cheek or lips is very rare between men, and may be confused by many Canadians with overt homosexual behaviour. Homosexual behaviour is not against the law in Canada; however, many people do not approve of it.

*How do you identify yourself in your country? To friends? To family? To persons in authority?*

Canadians share the expectation that everyone has at least two names: a "first name" and a "family name" (sometimes called a "last name" or "surname"). The family name is a formal identification; for example, most lists of people in telephone books, directories, banks or in government departments are indexed alphabetically by family name.

The first name is generally used by people who see each other frequently and work together on the job, as well as by family members and friends. Canadians think it is friendly to use first names, and formal to use family names.

You are seldom wrong (though you may be thought a little formal) to use a family name, but you should expect to be addressed by your first name by doctors, teachers and even some salespeople, who may address customers by their first names.

Deference, respect and formality is shown by addressing someone as Mr., Mrs., Miss or Ms., (pronounced Mister, Misses, Miss, and Miz) followed by his or her family name. Many older Canadians still expect to be addressed in this way, unless they have specifically said, "Call me by my first name."

The honorifics Mrs., Miss, and Ms. are neither consistently used or officially defined. Mrs. denotes a married woman, Miss denotes an unmarried woman. However, many women prefer the honorific Ms., which, like Mr. for men, makes no statement about marital status.

Canadians use honorifics sparingly. Though there is an elaborate decorum of the correct forms of address for various positions such as Governors General, Lieutenant Governors, Judges of various courts, bishops, priests and other religious orders, etc., generally speaking, most Canadians will show special or formal respect by addressing an honoured man as "sir" or woman as "ma'am."

Honorifics such as Dr. or Prof. (pronounced Doctor and Professor) and the ranks within the armed services and police are commonly used *in the context of their jobs*. Outside that context, the use of honorifics is optional.

It is best to follow the lead of the person making the introduction, that is, use the title (or no title) by which they are introduced. Most people consider it pretentious to introduce *oneself* using any honorific.

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See also Part 4 Chapter 1, Authority

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## Visiting

*In your country, what is your relationship with your neighbours?*

Most Canadians in urban areas are cordial to, but not closely involved with, their immediate neighbours. This is largely because Canadians are very unlikely to spend as much as a decade — let alone all of their lives — at the same address. In an emergency, the great majority of Canadians will respond quickly and generously to their neighbours' needs. People who live close together in a neighbourhood, apartment building or housing complex frequently make friends, particularly if they have something in common such as children of the same age. However, the closeness characteristic of traditional village life in some countries of the world is largely a thing of the past in the cities of Canada, although it still exists in smaller, more rural communities.

Most Canadians would be surprised if people came to their door and introduced themselves simply because they were neighbours.

*In your country, would you take a gift with you if invited to someone's home?*

In general, any gift should be small and impersonal — *not* clothing or jewelry. Appropriate gifts include flowers (a modest bunch, in season), a medium-sized box of chocolates, a bottle of an appropriate (neither very cheap nor very expensive) wine are all appropriate for an invitation to dinner or for the evening.

In many cases, when invited for a meal, it is entirely acceptable to ask, "May I bring something?" Single men or women who are not enthusiastic cooks often bring wine; men or women who enjoy cooking may confer with the hostess and arrange to bring a contribution towards the meal, such as a dessert or an appetizer. If there is a mutual interest in good food, discussion of an appropriate contribution is entirely appropriate, since it allows the guest to find out the answer to such questions as whether a red or white wine would be preferred, whether your hosts would like to plan the whole meal, or would prefer the guest to bring some particular item of food or drink. One is never wrong to ask politely, "Is there some food or drink you would like me to bring?"

*In your country, is it considered polite to refuse until asked several times?*

In so multicultural a country as Canada, there are many different customs in the homes of both newcomers and established Canadians who have retained customs from their country of origin, even if the people arrived in Canada two or three generations ago. The conventions of politeness may vary in detail, but in general, most Canadians appreciate directness. For instance, if you do not wish to eat something you are offered, it is acceptable to say, "No, thank you," and if you do wish it, to say "Thank you," and accept it the first time you are offered.

*When you visit someone in your country, would you expect to be shown the house?*

Customs vary in Canada from place to place and with the national or ethnic origin of the people concerned. For some Canadians, a tour of the house is their way of making guests feel comfortable; for others, it would be an invasion of privacy. The best approach is to wait until asked, and then make polite expressions of approval: "How nice you have made it look," "What a good idea to arrange the furniture that way," "What a pleasant view from the windows," etc. Although sometimes your hosts may say how much something costs, it is *never* appropriate to ask.

*What would be considered good table manners in your country?*

Good manners can usually be observed and copied in order to avoid embarrassment. Family customs may vary, but most Canadians eating in a restaurant avoid making any noise when eating liquid foods such as soup, they do not rest both elbows on the table, they do not pick up their soup bowls in their hands, and they use knives, forks and spoons to eat most foods. (Exceptions include using chopsticks in a Chinese or Japanese restaurant, or using fingers for some special foods such as fried chicken.) In Canada, good table manners forbid discussing such unattractive matters as medical problems, elimination, body functions, etc., at meals. These are all matters of taste, not rule or law, and they vary from place to place within Canada.

*How would you compliment your hosts for a good meal?*

In Canada, most people would compliment the hosts for a good meal simply by saying so in a polite phrase such as, "Thank you for a splendid meal," or "What an excellent meal!" or during the meal by praising a particular dish, "This is wonderful!" If the people enjoy talking about food and its preparation, this leads naturally to discussions of how food is prepared, what spices or herbs might be used, and so on.

Eating as much as you can is *not* a sign of your appreciation, nor is belching, which is considered impolite in Canada. If you do happen to belch, you should say, "Excuse me."

*How would you ask to use the bathroom in your country?*

In Canada, it is perfectly acceptable to ask, "May I use your bathroom?" Often, the hosts will cue you with the question, "Would you like to freshen up?"

*How would you know when to end a visit in your country?*

There is no inflexible rule, nor a generally accepted convention; therefore, it is up to the guest to notice signs of tiredness such as long silences. Generally speaking, the invitation to a first visit contains clues, such as "Come for dinner," or "Come for the evening," which imply that people will leave well before eleven on a weekday, and perhaps an hour or so later on a Friday or Saturday night. Do *not* expect your hosts to ask you to leave or signal your departure by standing up and yawning or any very obvious cue.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Practice "small talk" in groups (discussing the weather, sports, plans for the weekend, etc.). Discuss acceptable and non-acceptable subjects of conversation. (Not asking people about their salaries, not indulging in strong argument over religion or politics, etc.)

- Bring examples of questions and answers about manners from newspapers (Miss Manners, Dear Abby, Ann Landers) to initiate discussions about the variety of opinions in manners and customs, and also the common agreement about the principle of respect for the individuality and feelings of others.

- Role-play invitations for dinner, for a drink, for a movie, etc.

# Part 3 Chapter 2 **Canadian Families**

## Core Concept

Canadian families have changed a great deal in the past 30 years. A generation ago, families of three, four and five children were common, and Canada's population grew rapidly. Today, many couples choose to have one or no children, and population growth has fallen so much that if it were not for immigration, Canada could face shrinking numbers in the first decades of the 21st century.

## Something to look forward to ...

Canadians recognize the importance of families. However, because of the many different ways that Canadian families express the ties that bind them together, Canadians have learned to expect variety among family traditions and behaviour.

## Families

*What is a typical family in your country?*

Essentially, there is no longer one typical family in Canada. There are many kinds of families that have been recognized with names, including:

- "Single-parent" families composed of a father or mother with a child or children;
- "Blended" families composed of parents who have divorced their first spouses, remarried someone else and formed a new family that includes their children from the first marriages;

- "Childless-by-choice" families;
- "Extended" families composed of parents, children and other blood relations living together;
- "Nuclear" families composed of two parents and their one or more children, living apart from their relatives;
- "Traditional" families — a confusing term that reflects the changing nature of Canadian families in that people tend to use it to refer to their own families, or to the family type that they have encountered most often.

The family traditions of many cultural groups coexist with these statistically-observable variations; however, demographic evidence suggests that the family-forming behaviour of newcomers to Canada is indistinguishable from other Canadians in less than one generation after they arrive in Canada. For example, a family with two or three children may come to Canada from a country in which it is usual to have even larger families; however, once in Canada, they are very unlikely to have more children.

*What is typical family behaviour in Canada?*

Some Canadian two-parent families are more likely to share the duties of housekeeping and child-rearing than they were a generation ago when both duties fell exclusively to the woman.

In many cases, the parents in two-parent families both work outside the house, frequently managing two careers as well as children.

Canadian laws with respect to maternity leave have changed, and some firms are beginning to sponsor "day care" or "child care," or provide other benefits for working parents. Although many people feel strongly that not enough is yet done to ensure that women can both work productively and raise children, there is nonetheless more opportunity for working women than there was a generation ago.

The number of single, divorced or separated women with a child or children is greater than it was a generation ago. Statistics show that they are five times more likely to live in poverty than married couples.

*What customs characterize family life in your country?*

Canadian family customs are the customs of the countries from which the family members trace their origins. There is no set pattern to the private behaviour of Canadians, and there is no pressure to conform to a norm. Often, a family will blend the customs of more than one ethnic or cultural origin.

Interracial marriages are neither unusual nor remarkable in Canada.

## The "Generation Gap"

When newcomers come to Canada as adults, they may modify the way they live in their new country, but they continue to carry with them attitudes, beliefs and habits that they learned as children. Their children, on the other hand, grow up in Canada. Canadian experiences and customs shape their lives differently from those of their parents. As a result, newcomers often find that they are separated from their children more than can be accounted for by the years between them.

This is particularly the case when the children reach their teens. Children of newcomers often must live in two worlds. At home, they are expected to conform to patterns of behaviour from the country of origin. At school, their teachers and fellow-students expect them to conform to Canadian norms. Children of newcomers almost inevitably experience a distressing conflict between home and school, because both the family and the school tend to suggest that each has "the right and only way." Often, children rebel against their parents, and show resentment for the "old ways."

The problem is to find a happy balance between respect for tradition and conformity to peer group pressures. Over time, patience and understanding are almost always successful in bringing parents and children closer together again. However, this is not much consolation for those who are living through months and even years of estrangement from those they love. One thing is very sure: secrecy only makes the situation worse for everyone.

It is most important that parents not imagine that they or their children are uniquely sinned against or sinning. Because so many Canadians are fewer than three generations from their country of origin, there are many people who are well aware of the inter-generational tensions that can cause problems for newcomers. Often, the process can be made less difficult by the intervention of an adult who has lived through the experience, either as a child, or in dealing with her or his own children.

A great many doctors, teachers and social workers from virtually every ethno-cultural group in Canada have all witnessed or been a part of such situations, and can often help lessen the distress of those who are experiencing them.

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See also the Introduction and the following section on Marriage and Divorce

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## Marriage and Divorce

*What marriage and divorce laws are there in your country?*

Marriage and divorce laws are another example of the separation of church and state in Canada. Most religions and churches have strong rules about marriage and divorce; however, Canadian law stands independent of these sectarian opinions. The law sees marriage as an agreement between *equal* partners which can be set aside at the request of both or either party for a number of reasons that include adultery, cruelty or mutual agreement to end the relationship. Some religions see marriage differently. It is important to realize that while religious belief and faith is protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the laws with respect to marriage apply to all Canadians. In general, by seeing it as a contract similar to any other, the law gives a wider interpretation to marriage than do most religions.

This legal view of marriage has important consequences for the protection of women who find themselves caught in an abusive or violent relationship.

*In your country, how common is divorce, and what are its consequences?*

Though the divorce rate in Canada is five times greater than it was in 1968 when the law was re-written, it is still moderate when compared to other western industrialized countries.

In Canada, divorce legislation has been progressively liberalized, essentially allowing divorce on a basis of mutual consent as well as for reasons such as adultery. Divorce has no significant social stigma. Many divorced people marry again, sometimes creating "blended" families composed of children from previous as well as current marriages.

*In your country, do single women bring up families?*

In Canada, there is an increasing number of single-parent families composed of a woman and one or more children. This situation may be as a result of divorce, separation, widowhood or non-marriage. Although men are usually held responsible for the financial support of their children in such cases, the payments ("child support") can be difficult to enforce. These single-parent families are more likely to have lower incomes, to require social assistance, and to suffer some degree of economic constraint.

One third of Canada's single-parent families are led by widows and widowers.

*In your country, where would adult children and newly-married couples be likely to live?*

In Canada, many adult children who are over 18 and have completed their education do *not* live with their families. Most (married) couples choose to live *apart from* both sets of parents' families. Economic pressures may be modifying young Canadians' behaviour, in that statistics show a sizeable minority of young people living longer in their family home, or even returning to it after living independently.

*In your country, is it acceptable for unmarried couples to live together?*

It is commonplace in Canada for unmarried couples to live together, indeed, it is expected by some Canadians that young people will not embark on a permanent union such as marriage until they have lived together. Of course, there are also young people who still adhere to their parents' and grandparents' views about chastity prior to marriage. A socially acceptable, accurate, and neutral word to use for people living together but not married is "spouse," as in "He (or she) is my spouse." The legal term is a "common law" relationship.

*In your country, are birth control and family planning socially acceptable and easy to obtain?*

In Canada, birth control in the form of condoms is publicly available in any drug store, or from vending machines in many public washrooms. Family planning information is available from government departments of health and private agencies such as "Birthright" (which opposes abortion) and

"Planned Parenthood," (which favours "freedom of choice," that is, access to abortion). Medical advice is available from doctors. Canada has recently been considering revisions to abortion legislation, and there are some aspects of the law that are not as yet clear (1990). Abortion is available only through consultation with a doctor.

Women can get the necessary prescription for oral contraceptives ("The Pill") from a doctor on request, or other forms of birth control including IUDs (intrauterine devices), without reference to anyone else. Other forms of birth control are available, should oral contraceptives be inappropriate. Vasectomy for men and tubal ligation for women are elective medical procedures chosen by many people in order to limit the size of their families, or to eliminate the possibility of having any children.

In the foregoing and in all other private matters, doctors are forbidden by their professional ethics as well as laws respecting privacy from discussing personal medical information without the express consent of the person involved. Birth control is generally practiced and socially approved.

*In your country, are there established laws, rituals and behaviour patterns that govern courting, marriage and other relations between the sexes?*

As is the case throughout the developed world, Canadian attitudes towards sex and sexual relationships are changing. As far as the law is concerned, the country encourages tolerance and the recognition of individual rights; moreover, the law reflects majority opinion. However, newcomers will find people who militantly advocate change, and other people who equally strongly oppose it. Perhaps the best way to understand the Canadian attitude is the concept of the individual's right to decide how to conduct his or her own life. Logically, this right must apply to everyone. Accordingly, any form of coercion is not acceptable, no matter from what source.

Because they are looking for personal fulfillment in an economic context that is different from the one in which their parents grew up, Canadian men and women tend to look upon marriage as a partnership between equals, both of whom are seeking similar goals.

The consequences have included a marked change in the expectations of men and women, and of how they relate to each other. It is no longer the case that men find fulfillment exclusively in their careers or jobs, nor that women are expected to find satisfaction exclusively in child-rearing, family and a helping relationship to their husbands.

Increasingly, Canadian men and women are looking for more from each other when they enter a long-term relationship or marriage. Many women are looking for men with whom they can share a relationship based on equality and mutual interests. Men are discovering that they can find important satisfactions by sharing in child-rearing and maintaining a home. This blurring of traditional sex-related roles makes courting, marriage and long-term relationships very different from what they were in Canada as little as 30 years ago. Women take a far more active role in courtship and men are learning to re-define their masculinity in ways other than by taking a dominant role towards the women in their lives.

*In your country, when do you expect people to get married?*

In Canada, the average age at first marriage has been rising for three decades. Today, the statistical norm is for women to be 25, and men to be 27 at first marriage.

*In your country, would you expect women, particularly married women or women with children, to work in the formal economy?*

In Canada, there are nearly as many women in the formal work force as there are men. Women made up 44% of the labour force in 1988, an increase of 11% over 1970.

Many women in the Canadian work force are also mothers, some of them single parents. As a result, day care for children is an important issue in Canada. Government at all three levels is under pressure to provide more and better day care for children of working parents.

*In your country, how do economic factors affect the ways in which men and women relate to each other?*

Canadian society is advancing towards more and more equality between the sexes for economic, as well as legal and moral reasons. In Canada, more and more men and women have jobs and careers that bring them some degree of economic self-sufficiency. Women are free to choose the traditional roles of mother and housewife, if they can afford to do so. However, the fact remains that most people in Canada find that it takes two incomes to raise a family and achieve reasonable economic goals. This is true of people at all socio-economic levels: from the factory worker to professionals and executives.

There are many social consequences of this economic fact, perhaps the most promising being the potential for a more equal relationship between the sexes. Unhappily, the other side of this social trend is the increasing number of single-parent families that are at a serious economic disadvantage. As society and the economy come to depend on two incomes per household, it becomes clear that families living on only one income are relatively deprived.

*In your country, are homosexual relationships tolerated?*

Homosexuality involving adults over 21 was decriminalized in Canada in 1969. Since then, there has been a gradual easing of intolerant behaviour towards "gays" (ie: homosexual males) and "lesbians" (ie: homosexual females).

Canadians are not in agreement about homosexuality. For some, religious prohibitions make homosexuality totally unacceptable. For others, however, their sexual preference for people of the same sex is a matter of pride. Gay and lesbian organizations have helped to foster a growing tolerance for homosexuals. In larger cities there is a sense of community among homosexual people, and most people are tolerant, if not accepting. Just as there are bars that attract specific clientele that can be described in terms of age and taste in music, so there are "gay bars" in most larger Canadian cities.

## Concepts that are sometimes difficult to grasp

In Canada, sexual relationships are the responsibility of each adult person. The government does not intervene in matters of private sexual conduct, providing the people involved are consenting adults, that is, are over the age of 18. In the case of homosexual relationships, the age is 21.

A statement that someone "appeared to be over 18" is not sufficient: the law demands that every reasonable effort be made to discover the person's age. In the case of children under the age of 12, the law allows no excuses whatsoever.

The government *can and does* intervene to protect children or people suffering sexual abuse, *whether or not they are married*. "Sexual exploitation," "sexual assault" and "aggravated sexual assault" are punishable crimes defined by law. (The term "rape" is no longer used in Canadian law.)

Canadian men and women form social one-to-one sexual relationships in much the same way as in other Western societies. Increasingly, women take the initiative in meeting men and getting to know them better. Young people very rarely rely on their parents or families to choose their spouses, and those who do tend to come from families that have deliberately isolated themselves from the mainstream of Canadian culture. Instead, they "date," that is, take each other out dancing, to movies, to meals. In accordance with their own standards of judgement, they may have sex or live together without getting married.

Some newcomers from countries with different customs find it difficult to understand that this behaviour does not cause a lowering of respect for the women involved.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

The relationship between the family and the government is markedly different in Canada from many other countries. Canadians have come to expect that there are good reasons why there should be intervention in the family in cases of violence, abuse or neglect. Canadians also accept that social workers, teachers, doctors and public health nurses have an advisory role towards families. Conversely, Canadians believe that sexual preferences among adults are private, and the government has no business with them.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations concerning both feelings and facts about families. Emphasize that though traditions may differ, parental feelings are similar for all people.

- Discuss (and perhaps role-play) situations in which there might be intervention into families by Canadian authorities. Emphasize the difference between a drastic intervention (for example, separating children from a violent or sexually abusive parent) and a helpful intervention (for example, a public health nurse offering counsel on baby care or a school nurse suggesting that a child needs glasses).

- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of:
    - The nuclear family vs the extended family.
    - The career-oriented mother vs the stay-at-home mother.
    - Many children vs one or no children.

- With more advanced classes, organize a debate on resolutions such as:
    - People get divorced too easily in North America.
    - No one should begin dating until they are 20 years old.
    - Men need to take a greater role in parenting and housekeeping.
    - Homosexuality should be accepted equally with other sexual orientations.

- Role play asking someone out on a date. Reverse traditional roles.

# Part 3 Chapter 3 **Women's, Children's and Senior Citizens' Rights**

## Core Concept

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects everyone equally. It is important to know your rights to ensure that nobody infringes upon them.

## Something to look forward to ...

You can ask for and receive protection to ensure your own safety, no matter who threatens it.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

Individual rights bring with them individual responsibilities.

*First*, people should know their rights.

*Second*, rights imply obligations.
For example, your right to freedom of religion implies that you are obliged to respect the beliefs of others.

*Third*, rights imply responsibilities to the community as a whole.
For example, your right to Canadian social services implies that you should pay your share of the taxes that finance them.

## Women

*Are women in positions of influence in your country? Give examples.*

In Canada, women are free to pursue whatever role they wish.
Some examples of influential women in Canada include:

- Three of the nine judges in the Supreme Court of Canada (Canada's most senior court of law) are women.
- The Governor General of Canada from 1984 to 1990 was a woman.
- The leader of one of Canada's three national political parties (The New Democratic Party) is a woman.
- Approximately half of the doctors and lawyers who have graduated from university in the past five years are women.
- Women are members of parliament and cabinet ministers in the federal parliament and in the houses of assembly of the provinces.
- Women hold elected and appointed positions at the national, provincial and local levels of government.

The ideal of equality for men and women is protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, the movement towards equal opportunity for women in all aspects of society is a relatively recent change in Canada, and is far from complete or universal. Status of Women Canada is a federal government agency that monitors and advocates the rights of women in Canada.

See also Part 3 Chapter 4, Education

*In your country, what kinds of work would you expect to see women doing?*

In Canada, women may be seen driving buses and taxis, working as machinists, mechanics, engineers, teachers, social workers, police officers, as well as the many jobs within the armed forces. In theory, and to an increasing degree in practice, no jobs are "for men only," or "for women only." Some of the jobs and roles into which women are now moving are sometimes called "non-traditional" for women, because women have only recently started to train for, seek and hold such jobs. There still are jobs that have been called "female ghettos" because they are low paying, and held only by women.

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See also Part 2 Chapter 1, Economic Security– graph:
Distribution of Labour Force by Occupation

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*Is there any official or unofficial effort to improve the position of women in your country?*

Along with women all over the world, Canadian women have made important strides towards realizing the goal of equality. National, regional and local organizations support and encourage women to take advantage of their rights. "Equal opportunity" and "affirmative action" programs by government and some industries are striving to correct the imbalance between men and women in the workplace. Women make up 52% of Canada's population (1986 census). However, men still predominate in politics, administration and senior positions within business and industry. Though women have made immense strides forward in the past generation, the road to realizing the ideal of equality is still being travelled.

*Are there laws in your country that help to balance inequalities between men and women?*

In addition to rights stated in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and anti-discriminatory legislation at both the federal and provincial levels, there is ongoing pressure towards creating more laws that help make society fairer to women. Some of these areas include:

- Equal pay for work of equal value,
- Equal opportunity hiring practices,
- Day care for children of working parents.

A growing number of employers already practice these principles.

See also section "Who has jobs" in Part 2 Chapter 1

## Children

*What legal and moral obligations do people in your country have toward their children?*

There is increasing concern about child abuse and child neglect, both of which are crimes in Canada. Canadians believe that parents should care for, love, protect and ensure the education of their children. The law enforces these beliefs as far as is possible.

*How are these obligations enforced?*

Whereas a few generations ago, the law did not intervene between parents and children; today, Canadian law protects children from abuse or neglect.

In response to a complaint from a child, a parent, a teacher, or a medical person, or even a neighbour, a Children's Aid Society worker or provincial government child welfare officer can start an investigation into whether a child is being neglected or abused. It is important for newcomers to realize that teachers, doctors, nurses, etc., are *legally obliged* to report suspected child abuse, and that they can face charges if they overlook or deliberately ignore violence to children. If abuse or neglect can be proved, the child or children may be taken from their parents and looked after temporarily in a foster home.

If a woman and/or her children are being abused by the husband while she does her best to care for them, then both she and her children can receive legal protection. However, if she knowingly allows her children to be abused — even if she does not participate in the abuse — she may be charged under the law.

The Children's Aid Societies in Canada are charitable institutions in some provinces. They have a long history of caring for children in difficulties. Children's Aid offices can be located using the telephone directory of most large cities. The societies provide protection for children, and ensure that their rights are defined and upheld. They are the bodies mandated by some provincial governments to protect children and to investigate allegations of abuse.

A Family Allowance benefit is paid to the parents of children in Canada who are under the age of 18, and are maintained by parents or guardians. At least one parent must be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident under the Immigration Act, or a permit-holding visitor who is paying income tax in Canada. Applications can be made at the birth of the child, or on arrival in Canada at the local Income Security Office. The telephone number is listed under "FAMILY ALLOWANCES" in the Blue Pages of the telephone directory in the "Frequently Called Numbers" section.

See also Part 2 Chapter 3, Law and Safety of the Person

## Senior Citizens

*What position do senior citizens hold in your country?*

Canada has more senior citizens than ever before. A few generations ago, Canada was a "young" society, with only a small percentage of the population older than 65. Today, more than one in ten Canadians (11%) is older than 65, and that proportion will become larger after the next 20 years. Consequently, Canada and Canadians are increasingly aware of the needs of seniors.

*What rights and privileges do senior citizens have in your country?*

Canadians receive the Old Age Security Benefit (effectively, a federal government pension) at age 65, and those without adequate income receive an additional benefit called the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Some provinces add a pension supplement and extra privileges such as underwriting the costs of prescription drugs.

Newcomers can apply for Old Age Security if they are Canadian citizens, or legal residents in Canada. A full pension is payable after age 65 to people who have lived in Canada for a total of 40 years after age 18. Partial pensions are also payable to those who have lived in Canada for 10 years and for 20 years. For complete information on entitlement, and to apply, contact the local Income Security Office. The telephone number is listed under "Old Age Security" in the Blue Pages of the telephone directory in the "Frequently Called Numbers" section.

Many businesses, banks, theatres, etc., offer special rates for senior citizens. Most forms of transportation (for example, buses in cities) have low rates for seniors (often provided they use the services during off-peak hours). Most universities waive or ask only nominal fees for courses taken by senior citizens.

*Where do senior citizens usually live in your country?*

In Canada, senior citizens are most likely to live independently, as opposed to living with their adult children. Seniors most frequently live in their own homes, perhaps with the help of regular visits from a "homemaker" who is sometimes subsidized by government. Often, seniors move out of large houses because they find them inconvenient for an older person. They may then move into a "senior citizens' residence," that offers specially-designed rooms or apartments. When they become unable to care for themselves, seniors move to a nursing home where they can be looked after until death.

Many Canadians still follow the traditions of their countries of origin and care for old people at home. However, many older Canadians do not want to live with their adult children, but prefer to live independently as long as possible. It is important for newcomers to realize that the issues involved in different approaches to the care of seniors in Canada are freedom of choice, quality of life and quality of care. In particular, people from countries with different traditions should discover that the adult children of parents who are in senior citizens' residences or nursing homes are not necessarily either undutiful or unloving.

As the proportion of older people in the overall population increases, providing adequate senior citizens housing and nursing homes is becoming an important political agenda in Canada.

*How do people plan for retirement in your country?*

Although there are government and private sector privileges for senior citizens, it is necessary for all Canadians to plan for their old age. If they wish to live beyond a subsistence level after retirement, they should have a private pension or source of funds other than the Old Age Security. Investing for the future is possible through an RRSP (Registered Retirement Savings Plan), which also confers tax advantages while saving for the future. Many adult education programs offer short, inexpensive courses in retirement planning.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Many newcomers bring with them attitudes towards women, children and older people that are not in harmony with the mainstream of Canadian life, as expressed in customs, laws and government programs and services. For many newcomers, emotional reactions remain even after Canadian customs have been explained at a rational level. Teachers and other helpers can provide newcomers with basic awareness, so that as experience follows experience they can make the adjustment to Canadian ways.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Discuss attitudes towards women, children and senior citizens. If in a multicultural group, direct the conversation first to alternatives and then to Canadian norms.

- Role-play interactions between the three groups, *reversing* the "natural" roles — that is, have women play men and vice versa, seniors play children or young adults, as well as vice versa.

- See the situation found in Discussion Suggestions, Part 3 Chapter 4.

# Part 3 Chapter 4 **Education**

## Core Concept

Virtually every job opportunity in Canada has educational requirements.

In many cases, the necessary educational standards can only be achieved in a recognized Canadian school, high school, university, college or technical school.

In Canada, education is a provincial responsibility, which means that there are variations in regulations and educational practices among the different provinces.

## Something to look forward to...

Canadian educational institutions are heavily subsidized by government. Schooling is free (ie: paid by taxes) up to the completion of high school, and compulsory up to age 16.

Education in a great number of different fields of endeavour is available free (ie: paid by taxes) or at relatively low cost to children and adults of all ages.

## Obligations, costs, rights

*What educational opportunities exist for children in your country?*

Children of both sexes in Canada must attend school from the age of 5 to 15 or 16 (depending on the province). "Public" schools are supported by taxes.

They require no direct fees, although students are expected to buy some books and materials. In Canada there are "private" schools (many of them are residential or "boarding") that charge tuition fees; such schools educate a relatively small number of students from affluent families. (Notice that the usage of the words "public schools" and "private schools" in Canadian English differs markedly from British English.)

Formal education in Canada normally begins at or about age five in kindergarten, although pre-kindergarten (sometimes called "nursery school") is an option in many cities. Boys and girls are usually educated in the same schools and share the same curriculum and classes. The years from kindergarten to grade 3 are called "primary school", grades 4 to 6 are called "junior school", and grades 7 and 8 "intermediate school." "Elementary school" is the term for kindergarten to grade 8.

Thereafter, children go to secondary school or "high school," which includes grades 8 or 9 to 12 or 13. In some provinces, "high school" is divided into "junior high" (grades 7 to 9) and "senior high" (grades 9 to 12 or 13, depending on province).

In high school, students must take core compulsory courses, and may choose among a variety of optional courses that allow them to direct their studies towards their life goals. In Canada, teenagers are encouraged to make these choices for themselves, with the advice of their teachers, guidance counsellors and parents.

*What role do parents take in educating their children in your country?*

In Canada, parents are expected to be involved in their children's education. "Parent nights" in school are formal opportunities for parents to discuss their children and their progress with teachers. Children bring home a variety of messages from school in addition to their report cards, all of which are expected to involve the parents.

*What opportunities for higher education (university, etc.) exist in your country?*

Advanced education (technical college, university, etc.) is *not* free in Canada for anyone. However, there are scholarships, bursaries and government loans to ensure that qualified students are not excluded from a university education.

Newcomers from some countries are sometimes surprised that they cannot obtain a "free" university education, and they sometimes claim that they could have this privilege in their country of origin. However, many countries with apparently "free" higher education demand in return several years of national service in the armed forces; and many have so few university "seats" available that (on a per capita basis) fewer people than in Canada achieve degrees.

Newcomers should be aware that they are not being discriminated against, but that in Canada, *most* students finance their higher education at least in part by taking summer or part-time jobs. Universities, colleges and technical schools all receive funding from government in Canada, without which the fees would be many times higher.

*When does school take place in your country?*

In Canada, the school day is generally between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Monday to Friday. School terms last from the first Monday in September to mid-June, with the exception of approximately two weeks at Christmas, a Spring break of one week, usually in March, and statutory holidays.

In many high schools, students are only required to attend their classes, which often do not occupy the entire day. In other words, the students are *not* required to be in school all day. However, most students wish to use the libraries, laboratories and other resources of the school.

Extra-curricular activities for school children (ie: sports, games, clubs and other school activities that do not contribute directly towards educational courses) usually take place at the school after 3:30.

In addition to school holidays there are what is called "Professional Development" or "PD" days when for a whole or half day two to four days each school year, teachers hold educational meetings and the children are sent home. The children usually bring home a written note informing the parents approximately one week before the PD day.

See also Part 3 Chapter 6, Holidays, Recreation and Entertainment

*What opportunities are there in your country for people to ensure that their children learn the languages and culture of their original country?*

Many of the provinces offer "heritage language" courses, and some communities supplement public school with religious or national studies undertaken out of normal school times. There is usually a fee for such courses.

*What post-secondary educational opportunities exist in your country?*

Broadly speaking, there are three educational choices for the young adult who graduates from high school:

- Vocational or trades training,
- Further studies at a diploma-granting community college,
- Further studies at a degree-granting university.

All of these "post-secondary" educational establishments are supported by government, but they all charge tuition fees. Generally speaking, most vocational or trades training lasts a matter of months before the student is qualified for a job. Community college courses of study require from one to three years to complete. University degree programs to the Bachelor's level take three or four years. Thereafter, Master's and Doctoral degrees can take from two to ten years, depending on the choice of subject.

*How many people go to university in your country? Who are they likely to be?*

Each year, approximately 600,000 people attend Canada's 68 universities either full- or part-time, in search of a Bachelor's or first professional degree

(1986 figures). The percentage of women receiving Bachelor's and Master's degrees has been growing rapidly in recent years.

- Approximately 100,000 people graduate with Bachelor's or first professional degrees each year, of which in 1986, slightly more than half that number (53%) were women.
- Approximately 16,000 people received Master's level degrees in 1986, with women accounting for four out of every ten (43%).
- Approximately 2,200 people received Doctorate degrees in 1986, with women accounting for slightly more than one in four (27%).
- An increasing number of students at university are no longer drawn from the 18 to 25 age range. Canadians routinely return to university after having spent years in the work force or after raising children. In some cases, men and women complete degrees when they are in their 70s and 80s.
- An increasing number of students work while pursuing goals in higher education. In addition to younger people who characteristically take a summer job to help pay for their education, and sometimes a part-time job during the school term as well, there are many people who work full-time at the same time as they are taking courses to further their education, to upgrade their qualifications,or simply out of interest in the subject.
- Women have made important strides in the professions, particularly law and medicine. They are also becoming increasingly active in "non-traditional" fields of study, including engineering, science and mathematics.

- Only Sweden and the USA have more university students than Canada, as calculated in proportion to the three countries' total populations.

*Is higher education restricted to certain people in your country?*

The Canadian education system is designed to make opportunities available to people solely on the basis of their capacity to achieve educational goals. It is not restricted to the rich and powerful. Entrance to Canadian universities is based on grades achieved on leaving high school. (In some cases of adult entry, comparable achievements are judged individually.) However, studies have shown that there is a strong correlation between a high family income level and attendance at university by the children.

*When would you expect education to end in your country?*

In Canada, education is considered a lifetime activity. Every school system offers adult education courses; and universities, colleges and educational establishments of every kind attract people of all ages.

*In your country, does having a degree virtually guarantee you a job?*

In Canada, having a degree — or more than one degree — does NOT guarantee that a person will find a job. In Canada, educational qualifications constitute a basic minimum in a job description. Not having the necessary educational qualifications will certainly exclude you; however, having them will not guarantee that you are accepted.

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See also Part 2 Chapter 1, Economic Security: Employment

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## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

A common problem for many newcomers is the Canadian insistence on having documentation on paper for education, training and other skills. In part, this requires that newcomers adapt by bringing appropriate documents with them or earning them in Canada. Newcomers need to learn how to answer questions about qualifications in ways that are both accurate and appropriate for Canadian administrative purposes.

- For example, many adult women newcomers do not realize that Canadian business and government increasingly recognize the importance of experience as well as academic training, volunteer work as well as paid employment, *provided* the person concerned advances the idea in appropriate terms.

- For another example, many people possess years of experience and membership in national guilds or unions that can be persuasive evidence that they need only qualify (as opposed to learn their skills) in Canada. Many universities, colleges, schools and training centres offer pre-qualifying examinations on request that allow both the institution and the individual to discover how much further or

> adaptive training is necessary before the newcomer can be qualified in Canada. Often, the major obstacle is not knowledge or skill, but rather mastery of English or French.

In some cases, newcomers to Canada face an initial *decline* in their status, earning power and standards of living. For some, this experience leads to loss of self-respect. Understandably, some people experience an overwhelming sense of isolation under such circumstances, which can lead to frustration, resentment and anger, even in some cases to emotional illness.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Discuss the local system of education in the country or countries concerned, and establish correspondening levels of achievement with Canadian education. Talk about subjects taught and the meaning of marks or grades. Note that for some newcomers, Canadian education may seem far too generous with "A's" and "Excellents" on their own or their children's report cards; while for others, a "C" or a "Fail" may seem like the end of their world. The key to understanding is often in communicating that in Canada, a teacher is not considered infallible: marks and grades can be re-examined, and (for most teachers) the explanations of marks are considered as important as the marks themselves.

- Role play an interview with a teacher, guidance counsellor or employment counsellor on the subject of educational opportunities. Correct sex-biases and unrealistic expectations, reducing both exaggeration and submissiveness. Emphasize assertive language skills, distinguishing them from aggressiveness.

- Have students describe their own educational qualifications and discover the equivalent levels in Canada. Focus on factual statements that can be verified with diplomas, marks, years of study, etc.

- Role-play a teacher-student and a teacher-parent interview. Swap roles. Cast the characters against stereotype, that is, have a younger person play the teacher.

- Have students make statements about their life goals, indicating the place of education in their plans. This should lead to discussion of educational opportunities and necessities in Canada.

# Part 3 Chapter 5 **Canada, A Country of Many Peoples**

## Core Concept

Canada is a multicultural country made up of peoples from many origins. With the exception of the First Peoples (the Indians and Inuit), who make up 3% of the population, all other Canadians are either newcomers, or the descendants of newcomers. Two European nations, England and France, are the non-Native founders of what is now called Canada. Today, one out of every four people in Canada comes from an ethnic background other than English or French. Canadians not only come from different ethnic origins, they commonly think of themselves as coming from more than one ethnic origin.

## Something to look forward to ...

You can reasonably expect to meet Canadians with whom you share a common ethnic origin.

Canada encourages everyone to be proud of his or her origin. When people become Canadian citizens, they are not asked to relinquish either their ancestral culture or their heritage. However, they are expected to conform to Canadian core values, laws and public behaviour.

An immigrant to Canada chooses to live under the protection of the Constitution and laws of Canada, which forbid discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

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See also Part 4 Chapter 3, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism

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## Something to be aware of ...

On the one hand, Canada needs immigrants. On the other, Canadians' enthusiasm to accept immigrants is not as great as it was in the years immediately following the Second World War, when Canada was enjoying an economic boom. This ambiguous situation affects attitudes on the part of both newcomers and Canadians.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

If everyone's person and dignity are to be protected, then everyone must observe both the letter and the spirit of Canadian law. People are obliged to respect the laws that protect them, and to grant those around them the same protection from bigotry, racism and intolerance as they wish to enjoy.

Some newcomers have been brought up in an atmosphere of suspicion and intolerance directed at people of another national ethnic origin. Sooner or later, they will encounter Canadians who come from the group they have been taught to distrust. However, in Canada, they both meet as Canadians, protected by the same laws. Difficult and imperfect as such meetings can be, Canada's history proves that they can be conducted with tolerance and mutual respect.

Canada has survived as a country in large part because people have chosen to abandon ancestral suspicions and hatreds. Some newcomers whose countries of origin are in turmoil can find themselves under pressure to use Canada as a base of operations or a new battleground. Becoming an immigrant to Canada means refusing to bring such hostilities to Canada.

## Canadian ideals with respect to peace and order

*What laws relate to violence in your country?*

Canadians' belief in the rule of law means that they do not take justice into their own hands in acts of revenge or reprisal.

*What laws govern the possession and use of firearms in your country?*

In Canadian law, there are three classes of firearms: sporting (hunting and target shooting rifles and shotguns), restricted weapons (handguns and pistols) and prohibited weapons (fully-automatic weapons).

People cannot buy firearms unless they are over 16, and have a Firearm Acquisition Certificate from the Registrar of Firearms in the local police department. This certificate indicates that the holder does not have a serious criminal record. The store selling the firearm then completes a form which the purchaser takes with the firearm to the Registrar of Firearms, who registers the weapon. This allows the owner to keep the firearm at one address. To transport the weapon requires a further permit.

In the case of people (mainly in the North) who require rifles and shotguns to hunt, these regulations (including the age restriction) are modified.

In order to carry a handgun (pistol, revolver, automatic), a person must have a "Permit to Carry" which is only given to people who can prove that they require the weapon because of the nature of their jobs. In practice this means such people as bank guards, security officers, etc. No one may own fully-automatic weapons.

Canada's gun control laws are in keeping with its nature and ideals. On the one hand, many Canadians in the North carry and use firearms on a routine basis as hunters, trappers, and people who travel in the wilderness. On the other, the majority of Canadians live in cities where guns have no legitimate function.

*Unlike* the depiction of North American life in films and on television, Canadians do not carry and use firearms to settle differences. The Canadian homicide rate of 2.5 per 100,000 people compares favourably with European countries (ie: Italy at 2.1; Great Britain at 1.1) The United States of America, by contrast, has a homicide rate of 8.8 per 100,000.

In order to hunt, a person must have a hunting licence, which in some provinces requires that he or she pass a safe gun-handling course.

*What laws, customs and ideals govern peaceful behaviour in your country?*

Canadians of all national and ethnic origins share the ideal that public violence should be avoided. Canadians value compromise as a solution to hostility, and for more than a century and a quarter have repeatedly used this technique to maintain peace and the rule of law. However, those who think that Canadians are easily dominated mistake tolerance for timidity. Canada's history is replete with examples of hard-fought elections, vigorously-argued causes and strongly-worded exchanges over matters of principle. Tolerance is not seen by Canadians as a sign of weakness, but as a courageous willingness to forgo the hatred and fear that have characterized so much history.

*What role do the armed forces play in your country?*

There is no conscription or "national service" in Canada's armed forces. Members of the military take no part in political life, beyond casting their individual votes in elections, as do all other citizens. Canada has an enviable international reputation for sending armed forces as United Nation's observers and peacekeepers. Canada's armed forces are professionals with a proud tradition of service that includes battle honours in World Wars I and II, and Korea. Except under very exceptional circumstances, the armed forces do not perform any policing duties within Canada.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Being a newcomer often means feeling isolated. Under such circumstances, it is easy for a person to believe that nobody has experienced anything similar to what he or she is going through. In fact, Canada is a country in which a great many people understand from experience what it is to be immersed in a strange society.

Many Canadians know that being a newcomer means living with some sense of loss at leaving another country and way of life. No matter that every newcomer choses to come to Canada, and no matter how much he or she prefers Canada in many respects, there will always be aspects of the old country that will be remembered, perhaps even mourned. If for political reasons a newcomer can never return to his or her country of origin, even for a visit, these emotions are particularly poignant.

Sometimes, loneliness or a sense of loss can be the reasons why newcomers reject Canada and Canadians. When these emotions lead to obsessive concentration on a few people who are also from the same country, the newcomer is isolated from the very experiences that will help cure the sense of isolation and end the period of mourning for a way of life that cannot return. In some cases, newcomers in this unhappy state have been exploited by unscrupulous people.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Organize a debate on the following resolution:
    - That handguns should be illegal.

- Discuss unfair discrimination by having each student give an example, and then make suggestions about what should be done a) to provide redress in the individual case and b) to guard against the situation happening again.

- Seek suggestions about what should be done in situations involving isolation and rejection, using the following situation:

Tell the following story slowly twice. (If necessary, adapt the names and situation to the country or countries of origin of the students in the class.) Ask questions and respond to questions to ensure that everyone agrees on the facts.

*Violetta is 67. She came to Canada 5 years ago. Since her two children completed their educations, she has been living alone in an apartment. Her children visit her faithfully each weekend, and once a month she visits the club she helped to found when she was among the first people from her country to arrive in the city. Her English is imperfect, and her knowledge of life in Canada limited. Her son, Stephan, and daughter, Maria, have just discovered that Violetta is making regular contributions of more than one hundred dollars a month to a fund called The Democratic Rights Alliance of the People, which is operated by a man named Michael who claims to come from the city in which Violetta was born. When Violetta's son Stephan investigates, he finds that there is no such fund or organization registered in Canada, nor to the best of his knowledge, in the old country. What should Violetta's children do?*

Possible responses. Have the group rank the following possibilities in order, and then discuss their preferences.

1. *Do nothing. What Violetta does with her money is her own business.*
2. *Have Stephan meet with Michael and threaten to beat him up if he ever comes near their mother again.*
3. *Have a fellow-newcomer from Violetta's country and of her own age counsel her not to waste her money.*
4. *Take Violetta out more regularly, gradually introducing her to more people who are not necessarily from her old country.*
5. *Obtain medical advice about Violetta's competence to manage her own affairs.*
6. *Get a lawyer to restrict Violetta's ability to handle money.*
7. *Suggest that Violetta move to a senior citizens' home.*
8. *Go to the police and lay charges against Michael.*

The ensuing discussion among the participants will likely involve them not only in talking about what should be done, but also about the likely causes of the situation.

# Part 3 Chapter 6 **Holidays, Recreation and Entertainment**

## Core Concept

There is a wide range of sports, cultural activities and other forms of recreation in which Canadians participate. Because many of them are derived from the countries and ethnicities from which Canadians come, newcomers can expect to find familiar activities to fill their leisure time.

## Something to look forward to ...

In Canada, it is possible to sample a wide range of cultural and recreational activities which compete for public support and participation.

## Holidays

*What are usual working times and days in your country, and what is their significance?*

The working day for government employees is 7.5 hours per day, 37.5 per week, Monday to Friday. Though many people work longer hours, the government sets a standard against which it is possible to compare most jobs. On Sunday, banks and most businesses are closed. Although many factories and businesses are closed on Saturday, shops are open on Saturday, and in some provinces, Sunday as well.

*What are the national (general) holidays in your country?*

There are nine general holidays per year.

- Christmas Day, December 25,
- Boxing Day, December 26,
- New Year's Day, January 1,
- Easter, a movable holiday, usually in April,
- Victoria Day, May 24, the Queen's official birthday (not observed as a holiday in Quebec),
- Canada Day, July 1, celebrating the birth of the country,
- Labour Day, the first Monday in September,
- Thanksgiving Day, the second Monday in October,
- Remembrance Day, November 11 (not a full day holiday for most people),
- The first Monday in August is a holiday in most provinces,
- In addition, there are local and provincial holidays, of which the most faithfully observed is Quebec's "fête nationale" St. John the Baptist Day / Fête de St- Jean Baptiste, June 24 .

Holidays are not universal, since many services and entertainments remain open for business. Government offices, banks and most businesses close for the national holidays. If a person must work on a holiday, he or she must be given an equivalent time off, or paid overtime.

*How much vacation do people take in your country? When and how do people take their vacations?*

At least two weeks paid vacation is mandatory in most full-time jobs. With seniority this rises to three weeks, and even (rarely) a month. When and how people take vacations in Canada has become more and more flexible in the last two or three decades. Traditionally, the two weeks are taken in the summer. This is still the case for most couples with young children. The possibilities are as varied as the people concerned.

The "classic Canadian summer vacation," still favoured by many Canadian families, is to own or rent a summer cottage near a lake or the sea. Tourism vacations in Canada or overseas (especially to Europe) are very popular, as is camping either by car or by hiking or canoeing. Single people or couples with no children often take vacations in the winter. They usually either fly south to a warm climate, or take a skiing vacation in Canada or the northern USA.

*What are the school vacations in your country?*

In Canada, school vacations are between mid-June and the day after Labour Day in September. Easter, which in some parts of the world is the focus of spring school holidays, in Canada is generally limited to the same statutory holidays as business and government, although some schools have a week's holiday. Schools are closed between Christmas and New Year.

University and college vacations are somewhat longer. Many schools and universities now offer summer courses or a full summer semester in which to further one's education. A "Spring Break" of one week in February or March has become traditional at most Canadian universities. The long summer vacation allows older children and university students in particular an opportunity to work part-time to help finance their educations.

The parents of young children often find the long summer vacation a major problem, especially if both parents work. Options for young children include a wide variety of municipal summer attractions including such activities as courses in swimming or other sports and pastimes, usually at a nominal fee. Affluent parents often send their children to residential summer camps, which offer a variety of activities including instruction in summer sports (sailing, swimming, canoeing), frequently with a cultural component (music, art, drama). Many universities offer educational courses for older children at a nominal fee.

## Recreation

*What would you expect people to do for recreation during their free time in your country?*

Sports and recreations you would expect to see in any city park in Canada during the summer include soccer, football and baseball. Running or biking for exercise or (more rarely) in competition are also popular. Boating and fishing attract many people during summer: many Canadians have a canoe or a small boat that can be carried on or behind a car. During the winter, the most popular outdoor winter recreations are skating and skiing either cross-country (the more popular) or downhill (the more expensive). Skating on frozen lakes and ponds is not as frequent as it used to be a few generations ago, because skating and hockey now take place on indoor rinks. Other indoor winter sports include bowling, curling and hockey.

Private "health clubs" in the cities provide gymnasium facilities for people who want to stay fit. They offer such activities as "aerobics" classes and weight lifting. Martial arts (Kung Fu, Tae Kwon Do, Karate, etc.) are increasingly becoming popular activities that are usually offered by privately-operated clubs, and often available as courses through "continuing education" programs at universities, colleges and through local boards of education.

Most cities and towns have public facilities for recreation that include leisure centres with a gymnasium, a swimming pool, sports fields, and areas for other physical activities such as squash, tennis, badminton, weight lifting, etc. Generally speaking, such community facilities and the instruction or coaching they offer are less expensive than private facilities.

*What public parks exist in your country?*

Canada has the most extensive system of parks in the world. In addition to municipal and city parks of a few acres, which include sports fields and open areas, there are 36 national parks, some of them covering thousands of square kilometres — spaces larger than some countries. Provincial parks on the same scale exist in the larger provinces. People visit national and provincial parks to enjoy unusual and beautiful natural phenomena — mountains, lakes, hot springs, waterfalls, forests, wildlife, etc. Canada's national parks are an expression of a reverence for nature: they preserve forests, lakes, rivers and mountains virtually untouched, along with the native animals, birds and fish that live there.

There are also national and provincial parks that capture Canada's history. These include working villages in the styles of the 18th and 19th century, and preserved or restored forts built generations ago. These historic parks are essentially museums into which one can enter and see how other generations lived and worked. National and provincial historic sites, parks and monuments are one of the best ways of discovering Canada's history in an immediate and lively fashion.

City and municipal public parks (the word is the same, the size on an entirely different scale) are generally free, although heavy use makes it usual to book facilities such as tennis courts or baseball diamonds ahead of time. National and provincial parks have nominal fees. A single, annual entry fee purchased for your car allows you to drive into all Parks Canada (ie: national) parks, at least one of which exists in every province and territory.

## Passive Recreation

*What sports or pastimes do people watch in your country?*

In Canada, people watch such sports as baseball, soccer, Canadian football, American football, figure skating, hockey, basketball, tennis, golf, automobile racing and a variety of other professional and amateur sports, both on television and as spectators at the sports venues. In addition to league games in professional teams, university, college and high school teams attract spectators who identify with one team or another, often because a member of their family is playing.

*Do people in your country spend much time watching TV?*

The average Canadian spends as much as 27 hours each week watching television. Television is a major source of entertainment, providing fictional drama and sports as well as public affairs and news.

## The arts and cultural activities

*What museums and art galleries exist in your country?*

There are national and provincial museums and art galleries in many cities of Canada. It is possible to visit major Canadian museums and art galleries to see international masterpieces as well as Canadian art, produced by people of all the many cultures that make up the Canadian mosaic. Provincial capitals are well supplied with museums and art galleries, and there are travelling shows that allow Canadians from different parts of the country to share their heritage. Even small communities have municipal museums, often in historic houses that once were the homes of significant Canadians.

As might be expected, Ottawa, as the National Capital, has the greatest concentration of museums. Similarly, the older provinces and cities are particularly rich in museums and historic houses, some of them dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. Canadians have documented and preserved their more recent past as well; the more newly-settled areas are no less enthusiastic to preserve the heritage that was brought to their regions and established in some cases only a generation or two ago.

*What music and drama would you expect to hear in your country?*

In the past 30 years, Canada has experienced a renaissance in the arts. A wide variety of drama and music composed and performed by Canadians has enlivened every region, giving voice to both local and national aspirations. Television and radio bring the most commercially and critically successful performers to a wide audience. The larger cities offer music and drama that appeal to many tastes, often reflecting the national and ethnic origins of Canadians who have settled in that particular area.

Music, dance and drama festivals are a summertime Canadian tradition, often being held in relatively small cities, towns and villages where the audiences come for a holiday as well as to enjoy the performances.

## Entertainment: Dining

*What special dishes would you choose as particularly representative of your country, or parts of it?*

As is the case throughout the world, eating well appeals to everyone. Whether in a restaurant, at home, or with friends, eating and drinking together is a universal form of recreation. A wide variety of ethnic cuisines are available in most Canadian cities, but there are also regional and local specialties that are distinctively Canadian. For example:

The Atlantic Region is famous for seafood: not only Atlantic Salmon and lobster, but also oysters, clams, cod, mackerel and tuna. Almost anywhere in the Atlantic Provinces you can be served a dish of chowder, which is a thick, milky soup including potato, fish and shellfish. In all four provinces lobsters are a delicacy that should not be missed.

Nova Scotia offers unusual local foods including "Blueberry Grunt" — a kind of rich cake filled with blueberries that is served hot with cream; and a wide variety of apple dishes from the orchards of the Annapolis-Cornwallis Valley.

New Brunswick is famous for fiddleheads, which are the immature, curled-up leaves of edible ferns. Prince Edward Island is affectionately known as "Spud Island" for its potatoes.

More than three centuries of fishing give Newfoundland a rich tradition of cooking foods that come from the sea. In addition to many fish dishes, there are such local delicacies as seal flipper pie. Newfoundland is the home of "bakeapples," which are not apples at all, but rather a delicate wild berry; and partridge berries, which are similar to the cranberries that grow wild in most of Eastern Canada.

Quebec has a distinctive cuisine with special dishes for special times of the year. For example, tourtière is a ground-beef pie traditionally served at Christmas and New Year. Tradition has it that it was the Iroquois and Ojibway Indians who showed the first French settlers how to boil down the sap of the maple trees in early spring to produce delicately flavoured maple syrup that is often poured over pancakes.

Ontario retains many English and Scottish culinary traditions, particularly in smaller towns and villages. However, many other nationalities have also made important contributions. German style sausages are available in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, small cheese factories throughout Southern Ontario duplicate English and European cheeses. Some of Canada's best wines come from Southern Ontario.

From Manitoba's marshlands come duck and wild rice, and from Lake Winnipeg a unique fish called a Winnipeg Goldeye that is smoked and served whole.

Saskatchewan is the breadbasket province, growing wheat and other grains for Canada and export. Even though the prairie has been largely cultivated, wild berries such as the saskatoon still grow, and are served in pies and cakes.

Alberta's contribution to the table is beef, often served "ranch style" with chili beans in a tradition that extends north from Texas and Mexico.

British Columbia's Pacific Ocean fishery offers West Coast Salmon, crab and oysters. Rainbow trout come from the mountain rivers and lakes. East and West Coast Canadians will argue at length whether Atlantic or Pacific Salmon are better, but the truth is that they are both delicious. Try Pacific

Salmon barbecued or smoked by the method perfected by the Indians long before the Europeans arrived.

Canada's territories and the northern parts of the larger provinces offer cold-water fish such as Arctic Char. The people of the Yukon like to recall their gold-rush past by serving sourdough bread.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Newcomers may sometimes not appreciate that some of the holidays and leisure-hours to which they are accustomed do not apply in Canada. In the case of religious obligations, employers usually allow reasonable time off, often by "swapping time" with another employee or by use of vacation time. However, newcomers, particularly those who come from countries with more elastic concepts of how work is done, have to learn to conform with Canadian work practices.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations on both personal recreational activity, and the national sports, cultural activities and recreations of the students' countries. Encourage situations in which the students can discover that they can continue to find the recreations to which they are used, and can look forward to new opportunities. Correct the impression that recreation is necessarily expensive, but do not hide the fact that there are costs.

- Role play: Give the students roles as members of a Canadian family — father, mother, child — and have them plan a day's vacation in a city on a budget.

- Have participants list occasions that they would expect to have off work, particularly the informal occasions. Compare these to Canadian norms of work behaviour to introduce the Canadian view of a work ethic.

- Use the entertainment section from a Canadian Friday or Saturday newspaper to demonstrate the variety of active and passive entertainments available. Use multiple copies to have small groups plan a weekend's entertainment around different tastes and budgets. Have the students factor in the weather, the season, appropriate clothes, etc.

- Ask students to describe the national music and musical instruments of their own countries. their own favourite kinds of music, their expectations about music in Canada. Point out the varieties of music available in Canada: classical, popular (MOR = middle-of-the-road), Rock, Folk, Country, etc.

# PART FOUR

## ESTEEM NEEDS

## Shared Symbols of Canada 5

The **Bluenose** was the fastest schooner to sail from Nova Scotia. A representation of the Bluenose is on the reverse of the "dime" — the ten cent piece.

The name, "bluenose," was originally applied to Nova Scotians themselves because of their supposed correctness in matters of morality and perhaps because of the cold, North Atlantic winters they endured. The schooner Bluenose was launched in 1921, fished the Grand Banks and repeatedly won against American and other Canadian ships in international trophy races.

A replica of the Bluenose still sails from Halifax as a tourist attraction. From time to time the Bluenose II has joined sail-pasts with the international Tall Ships in ports such as New York in the USA, as well as Quebec City, Halifax and Sydney in Canada. She sails regularly to East Coast American ports as an ambassador of Nova Scotia and Canada.

# Part 4 Chapter 1 **Authority**

## Core Concept

Canadians respect authority, but they demand justification for its actions.

## Something to look forward to ...

Authority in Canada is conferred by position and ability, not by birth, sex or social status.

## Authority on the job

*How would you behave towards a person in authority on the job in your country?*

Canada's culture does not require what has been called a large "power distance"; that is, it is not necessary for a person to be overtly deferential to people in authority. Bosses, supervisors and people in positions of power have fewer privileges and marks of authority than in many countries. For example, people in Canada routinely call their supervisors by their first names on the job, and may frequent the same restaurants, entertainments and the like, or socialize with them after work.

This is frequently mistaken for insulting or arrogant behaviour by newcomers whose cultures consider it important to "know your place" in a fixed hierarchy. Sometimes newcomers assume that this behaviour implies disrespect, which is not the case. Rather, it is conventional for Canadians to ask rather than order, and concur rather than obey.

*What positions of authority do women hold in your country?*

In Canada, women hold positions of authority, and command exactly the same respect that is given to men in the same positions. Canadian women are police officers, teachers at all levels of education, lawyers, politicians, doctors and judges, as well as all levels of management in business and government.

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See also Part 2 Chapter 1, Economic Security: Employment

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*How do men and women work together on the job in your country?*

In Canada, men and women increasingly work together as equals. Though there are examples of sexual prejudice, Canadian society as a whole is moving quickly to realize the ideal of equal opportunity for men and women. Sexist behaviour is increasingly objectionable to men and women alike. Even when it flows from an unexamined preconception, such as assuming that it will be the women who fetch the coffee at business meetings, sexism is less and less tolerated in Canada.

## Concepts that are sometimes difficult to grasp

*How do people in your country deal with exaggeration and understatement in formal situations such as job interviews or dealing with people in authority?*

In Canada, exaggeration can be seen as lying to gain advantage, even though the newcomer feels that he or she was only being polite. Excessive, extravagant shows of politeness and respect towards a potential employer can be seen as "false" or artificial behaviour.

In Canada, some forms of understatement (ie: "Oh, I know only a very little about ..." as said by a knowledgeable person who does not want to boast) may be believed literally, even though the newcomer feels that he or she is being appropriately modest.

These problems arise during job interviews, where Canadians look for factual statements of competence and experience. Lying on a job interview is grounds for being fired at some later date when the lie is discovered, even though the newcomer felt that he or she was only expressing willingness.

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See also Part 2 Chapter 1, Economic Security: Employment

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In some countries, it is polite to answer in terms of what the questioner seems to want, and rude to give the blunt truth. Newcomers from these societies will initially find it difficult to adapt to Canadian norms with respect to "facts." In Canada, acceptable self-presentation does not include excessive modesty. An appropriate level of directness may at first be difficult for some newcomers, particularly women.

In other countries, self-statement (particularly by men) demands that they never admit to deficiencies. Job interviews that in Canada are designed to elicit facts can seem like challenges to such newcomers who, under stress, may make what seem to Canadians to be boastful and ridiculous claims.

The sensitive helper will recognize the societal bias of the students in question, and encourage them to re-orient themselves to a Canadian view of "facts" when being interviewed by persons in authority.

For some, this may mean "toning down" over-aggressive statements, and learning to ask questions that involve admitting that they do not know the answer. For others, it may mean learning to behave and speak in ways that they have been conditioned to think of as boasting. Focussing on the idea of "fact" rather than "truth," avoids inappropriate and potentially contentious involvement in ideas about morality. Politeness, accuracy, appropriate (ie: expected) behaviour are at issue, not moral codes or philosophic views of truth. However, newcomers should be aware that either over-exaggeration or over-humility may be misunderstood, particularly in emotional or tense circumstances.

Body language is a particularly important component of all such interactions, in all societies. People who may have been societally conditioned to be polite and submissive must learn to meet an interviewer's eyes. Conversely, people who may have been societally conditioned to respond aggressively when challenged, must learn to govern themselves against over-reacting. In both cases, the Canadian expectation for interviews is to be open in speech and body language.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

A common problem for some newcomers comes from a failure to recognize that the authority of a woman is the same as that of a man holding the same role or position. Those who are not used to seeing women as judges, police officers, public servants, social workers, teachers, bus-drivers, etc., may respond in ways that are considered offensively sexist in Canada.

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See also Part 2 Chapter 1, Economic Security: Employment

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## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about relationships between employers and employees.

- Role play a disciplinary matter (lack of punctuality), a new set of instructions. Switch roles. Have women in both supervisory and worker roles. Language functions include: giving and taking instructions, requesting and giving clarification, giving and receiving information.

- Organize debates on the following resolution:
    - Women are entitled to equal pay for work of equal value.

# Part 4 Chapter 2 **Economics — Banking, Saving, Spending**

## Core Concept

What you earn is not what you can spend.

## Something to look forward to...

At first, a Canadian pay cheque seems large. Even relatively low-paying jobs in Canada can seem to have generous wages.

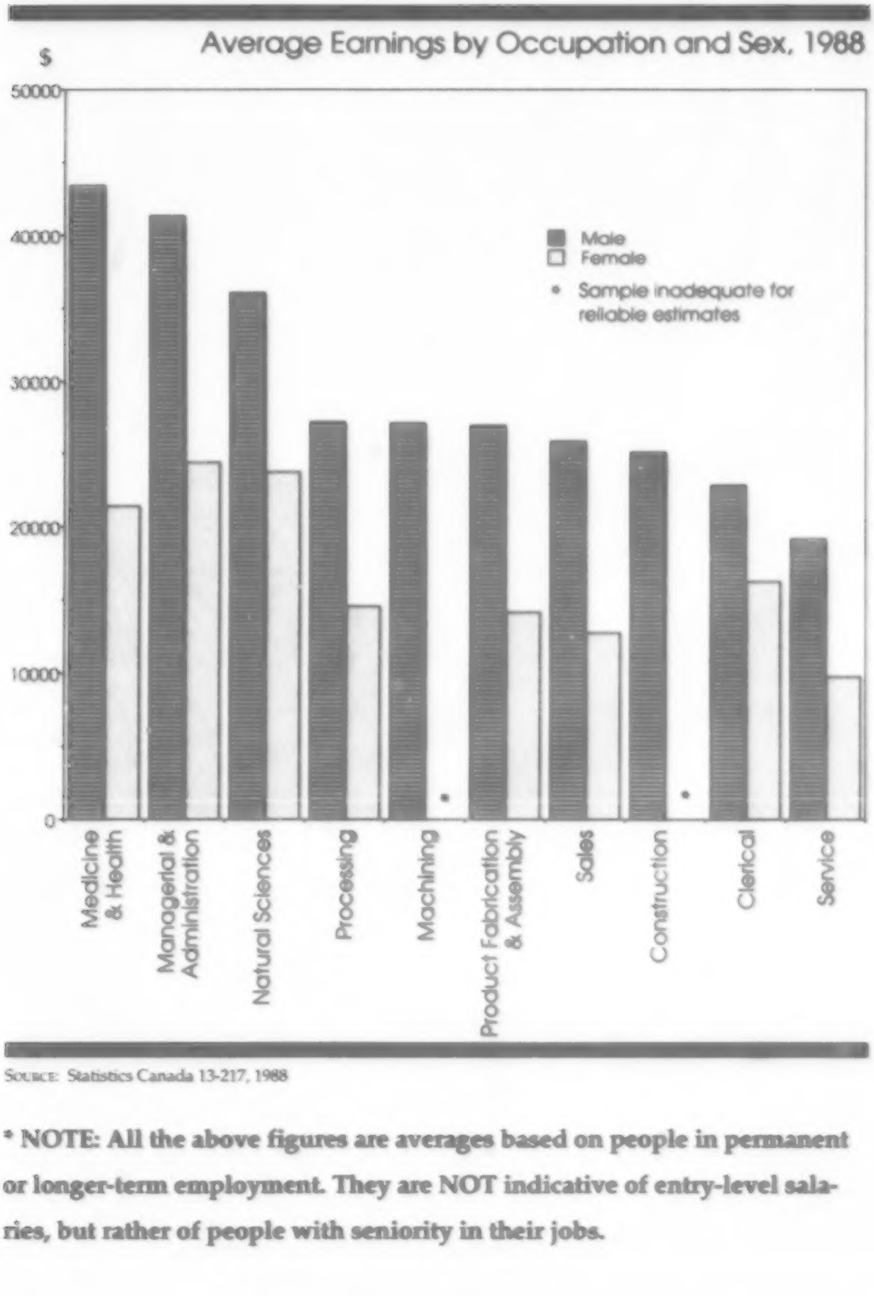
For many newcomers, Canada is their first encounter with an affluent, capitalist, consumer-oriented society. They are therefore very vulnerable to advertising and to the many "sales pitches" offered by people more interested in taking their money than helping them settle into Canada. Such people come in all descriptions: they could be members of Canada's majority, and they could just as likely be people from the newcomer's country who have been in Canada longer.

*What do people earn in your country?*

At first glance, Canadians earn a great deal of money. The following chart indicates average incomes for people working in the various classifications. **It is important to note that these are NOT indicative of the salaries that could be expected for a person finding a first job in Canada.**

Many jobs, particularly those that are part-time or casual (that is, not permanent) in the service, construction, manufacturing or processing sectors are *not* represented in this chart.

See also Part 2 Chapter 1, Economic Security: Employment



SOURCE: Statistics Canada 13-217, 1988

*** NOTE: All the above figures are averages based on people in permanent or longer-term employment. They are NOT indicative of entry-level salaries, but rather of people with seniority in their jobs.**

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

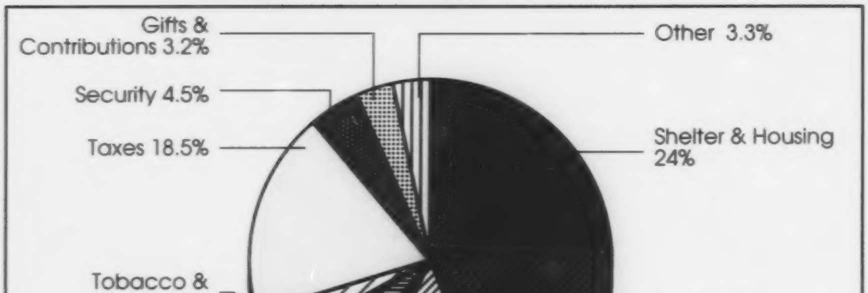
Newcomers are often surprised to discover that approximately one quarter of what they nominally earn is taken in taxes and compulsory deductions.

Most of the government deductions from each pay cheque that pay taxes, unemployment insurance, medicare, etc., are automatic; that is, the employer remits them for the employee.

Given a false sense of affluence by the gross total of their new salaries, newcomers have been known to overspend, taking on commitments in the form of expensive living space, car payments, expensive clothes, and all the many attractive objects that are for sale, for example: televisions, Video Cassette Recorders (VCRs), stereo equipment and so on.

[Refer to desk-top kit, pie chart on Expenditures.]

Average Percentage of Total Family Expenditures



Source: Statistics Canada 62-555: Family Expenditures in Canada, 1986

**NOTE: The foregoing figures, while accurate as averages throughout all of Canada, can be misleading to newcomers. Essentials such as food, clothing, shelter and transportation taken together account for nearly seventy per cent (68%) of the budget of low income earners. The average figures are skewed because high-income earners spend only approximately forty per cent (43%) on the same categories.**

## Compulsory payments: Obligations

*What deductions are taken off weekly or monthly pay in your country?*

Canadian taxes, unemployment insurance, medicare and Canada pension contributions are deducted from most pay cheques before the employee receives them. These are compulsory by law. Some companies have their employees contribute to private company pension plans, union dues, group life insurance, etc. These are part of the agreement to work in that company, and are compulsory by the company rules. The total of all these deductions can be between one quarter and one third of the total pay cheque (depending on the deductions and the salary level). It should be remembered that each of these deductions carries with it a benefit, either in terms of job security (union dues), health insurance or a pension.

## Concepts that are sometimes difficult to grasp

Taxes and other deductions are compulsory. Everything else is to some degree in each person's control. Everyone must find a place to live, food to eat, clothes to wear. However, there is considerable elasticity in how much to pay for these necessities. Essentially, this is the difference between steak and hamburger. Both are nourishing, but the one is many times more expensive than the other.

## Discretionary payments: Necessities

*How much of your pay cheque would you expect to pay for shelter in your country?*

In Canada, most people spend approximately one sixth of their pay cheques on shelter costs.

These costs include rent or mortgage payments, heating, property taxes, "utilities" (water, electricity and sewer rates), telephone and options such as cable television (which increases the number of channels available from three or four to several dozen).

If you rent an apartment, the landlord usually pays all the utilities except the telephone and cable television, and passes on these costs in the rent. In other words, you are paying for all these factors in your shelter costs, whether you write the cheques yourself, or whether you pay one sum to your landlord who then pays the separate utility bills.

*How much of your pay cheque would you need for food in your country?*

In Canada, food costs usually account for approximately one sixth of each total pay cheque. This can easily double if people eat regularly in restaurants, buy luxury foods, or think of alcohol and cigarettes as part of their food budget. Alcohol and cigarettes are expensive in Canada, because they are heavily taxed.

*How much of your pay cheque would you expect to pay for clothing in your country?*

Clothing in Canada is a necessary expense. Cautious shopping can hold clothing expenses well under one tenth of a person's pay cheque, but fashion-conscious people can spend a great d[illegible] clothing.

## Disposable income: Luxuries

*What are considered to be luxuries in your country?*

Luxuries are luxuries the world over. What you do not absolutely need is by definition a luxury.

In a relatively affluent country such as Canada, there are many goods and services that have both a practical value and a luxury component. Cars, clothes, travel, long-distance telephone calls can be called either business necessities or luxuries, depending on the nature of each person's business or point of view. What business expenses can be deducted from tax is an issue that should be examined closely by anyone who is considering self-employment. Revenue Canada offers explanatory booklets and brochures on this subject.

*What would you expect to spend on yourself in your country, and what would you buy?*

A great many newcomers (like most Canadians) feel that they would like to own a car. For many Canadians, a car is not absolutely necessary, but it is desirable for the convenience and independence it offers. For most car-owning Canadians, a car is a semi-luxury: it is used not only to get to and from work, but also for convenience and pleasure. When one considers what kind of car, the point becomes even more apparent: a fully-functioning used car can be purchased for less than $5,000; new cars cost anywhere from $10,000 to $30,000; and expensive cars can cost more than $50,000 — some even $100,000 and more.

Many people forget that the cost price of a car is not the total price of ownership. Licence and insurance are legal annual necessities: gasoline, oil, repairs and maintenance are continuing costs of ownership. The cost of transportation in the average Canadian's spending is made up almost entirely by the cost of owning and operating a car, which can add up to very nearly the same size of expenditure as for food (on the average, 12% for a car, as opposed to 17% for food).

## Debt

*How easy is it to borrow money in your country?*

In Canada, it is relatively easy to borrow money, and a great number of Canadians have debts of one kind or another. Provided debts are properly managed, there is nothing wrong with borrowing money, particularly if it is for a worthwhile purpose such as getting an education, acquiring real property or setting up and running a business. In all of these cases, people are borrowing money in order to make money, rather than merely to spend it.

In addition to loans from banks and other financial institutions, newcomers can contract debts to government, particularly the Transportation Assistance Loan that Employment and Immigration Canada makes to newcomers otherwise unable to afford travel to Canada. Transportation loans, which must be repaid, should not be confused with social assistance payments.

*Are credit cards easy to obtain in your country?*

Easily-obtainable credit cards (ie: department stores, gasoline companies), or bank cards (ie: Visa, MasterCard) are a major convenience factor, but they have costs that are not immediately noticeable. Many people find themselves losing control of their financial affairs because of incautious use of credit.

- Many credit cards have an annual cost, which you pay whether or not you use them.
- Most credit cards charge a much higher rate of interest on unpaid balances at the end of each month than do conventional loans. The cost of using credit cards in this way is very high, even though it is not usually apparent to a casual glance at "MINIMUM PAYMENT DUE" section of the monthly statement.

REMEMBER: *If you pay only the "minimum payment due," all you are doing is paying the credit card company interest on money it has loaned to you. You are not paying off your debt.*

## Saving

*Where and how would you save money in your country?*

Major lifetime purchases such as a house require down payments of cash, for which people save. People who are more cautious with their money prefer to save for most of their purchases instead of using credit, for which they must pay some percentage as "cost of money."

Most Canadians save money in banks, credit unions, caisses populaires, co-operatives or trust companies.

NOTE : The word "save" is used ambiguously in Canada. On the one hand, it is used by bankers to mean saving money in the bank; and on the other, by advertisers to mean saving money by buying something at a lower price than usual.

*How do banks work in your country?*

Banks, co-operatives and trust companies offer:

- A safe place to keep money rather than having cash at home or on your person where it may be stolen;
- Services to help you manage your money: different kinds of accounts, credit cards, bank access cards, travellers cheques, safety deposit boxes, etc.;
- Loans and mortgages.

Banks and trust companies make their money by:

- Lending their customers' money, for which they *charge* the customers interest, and
- Investing their customers' money, for which they *pay* customers interest.

Co-operatives and caisses populaires offer similar security services as banks, but whereas banks offer services to the public as an independent business, these other organizations give their members a degree of control on the use to which money is put. Investments are tied both to savings and to the loans or mortgages they offer to their members. This is important to many members for ethical as well as financial reasons.

Banks, trust companies, caisses populaires and co-operatives all require those who borrow from them to show that they have reasonable prospects for repaying the money. They ask borrowers to approve a "credit check," which is an investigation to discover how much the person has borrowed in the past, and whether or not he or she repaid it promptly. Credit checks are very thorough, thanks to computers and a system of collaboration among financial institutions. For this reason, it is very important to maintain a good credit rating by paying all bills and other financial obligations on time.

*Where would you turn for financial advice in your country?*

With the exception of a close relative who is *both* trustworthy *and* knowledgeable, your best commercial source of financial advice is the manager of a bank, trust company, caisse populaire or co-operative. Banks and trust companies want you to save and borrow in a responsible fashion, because if you prosper financially, so will they. Co-operatives add the incentive of joint ownership, in that every member is involved in the success of the co-operative, as opposed to banks, that exist to serve their shareholders. In addition, the way all these institutions do business is tightly controlled both by their own rules and by law.

Many schools, community colleges, universities and service agencies offer courses in money management, taxes, investment, etc. Some of these courses are also offered by associations and ethnic organizations, and are specifically designed for newcomers. Generally speaking, such courses (which usually charge a small fee) are more objective and reliable than those offered free by businesses.

*Are there institutions other than those listed above that lend money in your country?*

Anyone can lend money, and there are businesses that do nothing else. Such people and businesses often wish to maximize their profits by maximizing their customers' debt and hence the interest involved. Unlike banks, trust companies, credit unions and caisses populaires, which have stringent criteria for loans, these other "quick fix" money-lenders are happy to arrange money at high rates of interest for as long as possible.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Newcomers, like some Canadians, sometimes have problems controlling their spending and debts. The free market system offers so much encouragement to buy now and pay later, that it requires both experience and self-control not to over spend. On the other hand, some newcomers retreat so far from the economic system that they impoverish themselves by putting all their earnings in the hands of a husband, father or some other member of the family.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about obligations, necessities and luxuries, directing awareness that frugality and common sense are no different in Canada than they are anywhere else.

- Role play visiting a bank:
  - opening an appropriate account,
  - making deposits and withdrawals,
  - receiving advice on financial matters,
  - borrowing money for a worthwhile purpose.

Switch the roles between men and women.

- Introduce real objects and demonstrate the use of cheque book, pass book, deposit slip, withdrawal slip, etc.

- Have student form groups to draw up a budget for a one-wage-earner family of three, earning $25,000 annually. Have them criticize each other's budgets and suggest ways of improving the situation and their implications: ways of saving money (whose luxury?) adding an income (whose job is more important? and who looks after the child and house?).

# Part 4 Chapter 3 **Ethnicity and Multiculturalism**

## Core Concept

Canada is a country made up of a great number of different peoples who live together peacefully.

## Something to look forward to ...

By coming to Canada, you join in an experiment that began more than a century ago, and that still continues today. If it continues to be successful, this experiment in peaceful coexistence can be a guide for the world.

See also Part 3 Chapter 4, Canada, A Country of Many Peoples

## Ethnicity

*Are there people from different ethnic origins in your country?*

Before Canada was colonized by the French and the English, there were groups of First Peoples in every region, with distinct nations of Indians on the East Coast, the central area, the plains and the West Coast, as well as the Inuit in the North.

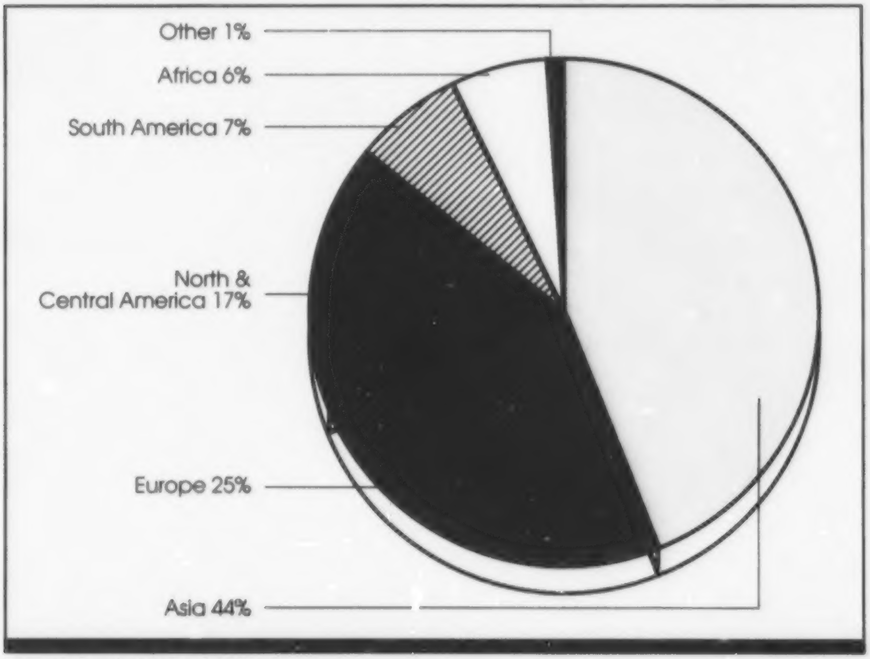
Successive waves of immigration from Europe brought people to Canada during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. They came from countries such as Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Lebanon, Italy, as well as Ireland, Scotland and England; and they found a country in which it was still possible to be a pioneer and break soil that had never seen a plow. These are the people who helped form the Canada of the early part of the 20th Century.

Sometimes even Canadians forget that immigrants from Europe were not the only newcomers. Blacks first came to what was later Canada as slaves; then when slavery was abolished in all of what is now The Commonwealth, they escaped slavery in the USA and came north, often with the help of an "Underground Railroad" of people on both sides of the border to whom slavery was morally abhorrent. The Black population of Nova Scotia originates from both of these two waves of immigration.

After both world wars there was a major influx of people coming as refugees from strife-torn regions of Europe. However, these newcomers were soon joined by people from Africa, the Caribbean region and the Pacific Rim. By then, the majority of newcomers had begun to settle mainly in Canada's cities. Toronto, for example, became home to more Italians than any other city outside Italy, and outstripped Nova Scotia as the home of the largest number of Black Canadians. People from many Asian nations came to the West of Canada, progressively helping to break down the prejudice and racial discrimination that had begun when the Chinese first came to Canada as workers during Canada's railway boom at the end of the 19th century.

In the last 20 years, Asian, African, South and Central American newcomers form the majority of immigrants to Canada. Today, only one in four newcomers to Canada is from Europe.

Origin of Immigrants, 1987



SOURCE: Canada Year Book, 1990

Canada was recognized by the UN in 1986 with the Nansen Medal as an example to other countries for its willingness to accept refugees.

*How do people from different ethnic origins relate to each other in your country?*

Canada is made up of people from many different racial and ethnic origins. An important continuing issue for Canadians is that the country should be fair to everyone, no matter what his or her cultural or ethnic origin.

Though Canada's record is not perfect, it has had some success in maintaining a multicultural society. Nonetheless, interracial tensions still exist.

As well as being socially unacceptable, it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of ethnic origin. Human Rights Commissions exist in each province and at the federal level, where complaints can be made and redress found in cases of overt discrimination.

Governments at all levels encourage pride in Canadians' ethnic origin by sponsoring or contributing to ethnic associations, of which Canada has a great number.

Interracial marriages are neither unusual nor remarkable in Canada.

*In your country, would you talk about your ethnic origin with people other than those with whom you share a background?*

Discussion of ethnicity is not necessarily prejudicial. In Canada, one's racial or ethnic origin is an acceptable subject of conversation. Canadians of all races and national origins take pride in talking about where they or their parents or grandparents came from, and how this is important in their lives.

In 1989, people from more than 150 different countries came to Canada as newcomers.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

A common problem for newcomers is the language used by both English- and French-speaking people when talking about ethnicity. Many people use such oblique words as "visible minorities," or "non-traditional immigrants."

All too often, the media and many people in public life tend to use the word "ethnic" to mean "everyone other than the (dominant) group to which I belong." *Everyone* in Canada belongs to some — frequently more than one — "ethnic group."

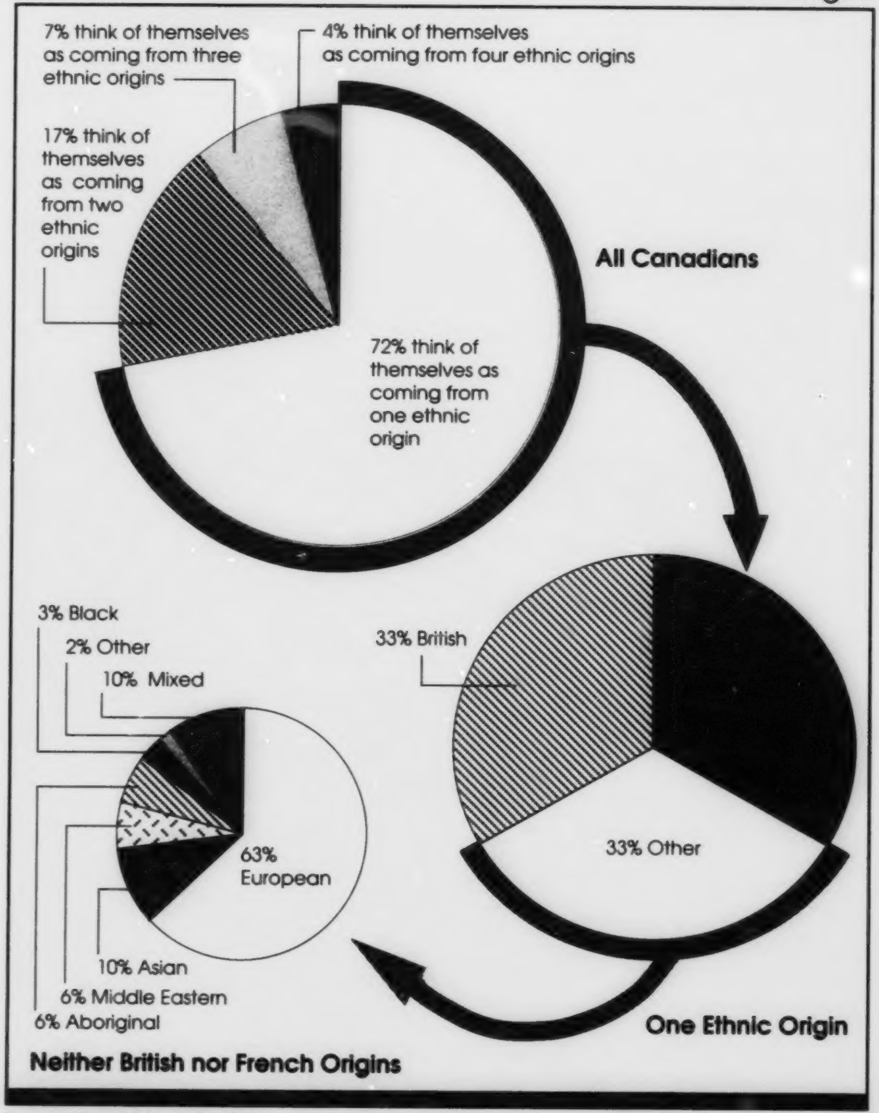
[Refer to desk-top kit, pie diagrams on Ethnicity.]

Newcomers have to learn how to deal with attitudes and expectations exhibited towards them by established Canadians. Not all of these reactions are necessarily racist or hostile: some stem from curiosity, surprise, and lack of understanding. Many Canadians are not fully aware that one in four Canadians is neither British nor French by origin.

*How many different peoples live in your country ?*

When Canadians were asked in the 1986 census what language they spoke as a mother tongue, the responses received by Statistics Canada included more than 70 different languages, of which several were "other languages related to ....." In other words, there are at least 70 different mother tongues in active

## Ethnic Origins



SOURCE: Canada Year Book, 1990

use in Canada. Nonetheless, to participate fully in Canadian life, every person must speak at least one of the two official languages, English and French.

*How does your country respond to the challenge of diversity in language and culture?*

Canada's approach to linguistic and cultural diversity is unique.

- Most countries of the world demand that newcomers formally renounce not only their citizenship but also their linguistic and cultural heritage.
- A few countries (for example, Philippines, China, Pakistan, Peru) are bilingual or multilingual, but all have a dominant language.
- The USA traditionally offered newcomers a "melting pot" of cultures, in which people are invited to lose their old national identities and languages in becoming an American citizen.
- The emerging union of European states is struggling with the idea of many peoples working together towards a common peaceful purpose.

Canada's experiment in official bilingualism and multiculturalism is imperfect, but promising. Canada continually re-defines itself in ways that are not always easy for a non-Canadian to grasp. Canadian history has been characterized by internal debates of the kind that have broken smaller countries apart. Nevertheless, the Canadian ideal of tolerant coexistence is still upheld by the majority, and Canada has continued to grow and change.

*Does your country have a history of racial friction?*

Canada, like most other countries, has experienced racial and ethnic tensions. Realizing the ideals of equality has never been easy for individuals or peoples, and Canada has had its share of intolerance and bigotry as well as cultural, social and economic discrimination against minorities.

Out of this turmoil has come a system of ideals that are reflected in Canadian laws at all levels. Even more importantly, the process of mutual adjustment works at the practical, everyday level of interpersonal relationships.

*How does your country recognize minority groups ?*

Canada's policy of multiculturalism is not merely a passive recognition of differences, but an active encouragement of diversity.

Governments at all levels:

- Recognize and help fund national and ethnic groups.
- Encourage the preservation of heritage languages.
- Help celebrate the different backgrounds of the peoples of Canada with a wide variety of festivals.

For example:

- Many cities in Canada have officially named or re-named streets in the areas where Italian or Chinese people have congregated.
- The languages and cultures of the First Peoples and the peoples of

many different national origins are maintained and taught in universities, colleges and culture centres throughout Canada.

- Annual multicultural celebrations take place in many communities throughout Canada.
- Heritage languages are taught in many schools and as part of adult education programs, often making it possible for grandchildren to talk with their grandparents in languages that might otherwise have fallen out of use.

The Government of Canada is also:

- Promoting the multicultural aspect of Citizenship not only to newcomers but also to multi-generation Canadians.
- Encouraging people from visible minorities to become part of national institutions such as the police, the armed forces and the federal public service through such acts as The Employment Equity Act that specifically addresses the under-employment of women, the disabled, First Peoples and racial minorities.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

Multiculturalism offers opportunities and privileges. It also confers responsibilities both to one's own cultural heritage and to the heritage of all other Canadians. Preserving one's own ethnicity in Canada implies having a continuing respect for the background of others. In cases where one's own heritage includes hatred towards a particular ethnic group, it is essential that such animosities be laid aside.

Language is perhaps the most important aspect of ethnicity. Many Canadians continue to use the languages of their countries of origin, and indeed there are heritage language programs that help maintain many of these languages. *However, all Canadians must be able to speak at least one of the two official languages, English and French.* It is essential to master English or French in order to participate in Canadian life.

This is not always easy, but it is a worthwhile part of the continuing experiment in multiculturalism that is an important aspect of Canada's identity.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Many newcomers misunderstand the relationship between two federal government policies: bilingualism and multiculturalism.

- Bilingualism involves Canada's two official languages, and has its roots in the history of the two European nations who settled Canada. English and French are the official languages of Canada, and all Canadians must speak one or the other, if not both.

- Multiculturalism is concerned with preserving the many traditions that have come to Canada since then, as well as those that were here before the Europeans arrived. Even though in Canada people are encouraged to maintain the languages and traditions they brought with them, only two languages are "official" — that is, the languages used by parliament, the courts, government and business. Once a newcomer has mastered either English or French, a much wider array of possibilities open up in education, work, leisure, politics and community life.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about how people from different cultural, national and ethnic origins, might live together. Make use of the participants' experience of interracial relations in their countries of origin, comparing and contrasting government policies and public attitudes.

- Role-play a married couple made up of two people from different races meeting their respective in-laws-to-be. Cast the parts both according to, and against type.

# Part 4 Chapter 4 **Religion and Belief**

## Core Concept

Canadians enjoy freedom of belief and religious expression. There are representatives of virtually every faith in Canada.

## Something to look forward to ...

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the freedom of religious expression. A Canadian is free to hold any religious belief he or she wishes, or none.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

The right to hold any religious belief implies the obligation to exercise tolerance of others' beliefs.

## Religion

*What marks of religious identification might you see people wearing in your country?*

There are many Canadians whose religion enjoins them to dress or wear their hair in ways that have special significance to them. Canadians whose religion demands such identifying marks do not expect everyone to understand the significance of their clothes, hair, etc. They recognize that their customs may be discussed and quite possibly misunderstood. In the larger cities where there are communities of newcomers or in places where Canadians of a particular religious or ethnic origin have settled, they are less likely to be the subject of unwanted attention.

*What religious education takes place in schools in your country?*

It is not easy to discuss education in Canada without becoming involved in a lengthy historical discussion of the two European founding peoples, the English and the French, and the major division in the Christian church between Roman Catholic and Protestant. Until well within living memory, it is was difficult for many people to conceive of education other than in a religious context.

- For example, most of Canada's older universities, colleges and schools were founded by different Christian sects. Today, in order to be eligible for government funding, all universities and colleges must be free of religious test — ie: be accessible to anyone of any faith or no faith, provided he or she has the necessary academic standing.

In many provinces of Canada, there are Protestant and Roman Catholic sectarian schools providing education up to the end of high school, both systems supported through taxes (ie: without tuition fees).

The steadily increasing number of people professing faiths other than Christianity has led to the de-emphasizing of religion in Protestant schools. Generally, religion in such schools is increasingly relegated to specific courses of study about the religions of the world, as opposed to religion (ie: Christianity) permeating the entire teaching process. Although some teachers are still members of religious orders, particularly in Roman Catholic schools, both they and Protestant schools are increasingly neutral with respect to religion, particularly in areas where there are likely to be students from a variety of faiths.

*What religious holidays are there in your country?*

In Canada, two holidays coincide with Christian festivals: Christmas and Easter. Easter coincides with the Jewish Feast of the Passover. Today, there are many people of different faiths, or none, who enjoy these holidays without reference to their religious origins. Sunday is a holiday with Christian significance, but again in an increasingly secular society, religious observances are entirely a matter of private choice.

Most employers provide the opportunity for people to choose to take holidays on days when they are obliged to make religious observances.

*What religious observances might one see in your country?*

In larger Canadian cities, it is possible to see a wide variety of religious buildings that include representatives from most varieties of Christianity, as well as Islamic mosques, Jewish synagogues, and the meeting places of many other religions, many of them using the language of the national group who profess them. Many of Canada's First Peoples are rediscovering the Native Spirituality of their ancestors.

In smaller towns and villages of Canada, religion is still a strong element in the social fabric. Smaller communities centre on the church to a greater degree than in cities, and a person's social interactions can be given structure by the religious group to which he or she belongs. It is impossible to generalize about the religious composition of smaller cities and towns in Canada, because some definable religious groups settled in particular areas. The religious/ethnic character that the settlement of the 19th and early 20th centuries gives to Canada is a source of pride to many Canadians.

## Rites of Passage

*What rites of passage such as birth, naming, coming of age and death are maintained in your country?*

There are no universal rites of passage in Canada, but there is general respect accorded those observed by specific ethnic or religious groups.

Graduation from high school is a non-religious occasion for celebration by a great number of Canadians. Characteristically, it involves a school ceremony that includes a valedictory by one of the graduating class, and a dance at which everyone wears full formal attire.

*What are the conventions of death in your country?*

Because Canadians are free to practice whatever religion they prefer, it is possible to find a variety of religious customs and observances with respect to death.

*What laws are there with respect to death in your country?*

In Canada, all deaths must be certified by a licenced physician. Without this certification, it is impossible to complete such legal formalities as wills, inheritances, benefits to survivors (insurance), as well as official government recognition of the death for income tax purposes.

Private burial of bodies is not legal. In most parts of Canada, bodies may only be buried in recognized cemeteries by arrangement with a professional mortician (undertaker), called a "funeral director." Although the preparation of bodies for cremation or burial must be done by a registered mortician, funerals need not be expensive or elaborate.

Cremation is increasingly popular among people of many faiths, or none. The resultant ashes can be disposed of by the survivors as they see fit or in accordance with the person's will.

*What laws exist with respect to inheritance in your country?*

If a person dies in Canada leaving a will (ie: a written statement of what should be done with his or her possessions), his or her "estate" (everything he or she owned) is disposed of according to the deceased person's will. If not, the estate is disposed equally among the spouse and surviving children of both sexes. In Canada, it is *not* automatic — and indeed is very rare — for the eldest son to inherit everything. It is difficult and time-consuming to alter a will through litigation (by suing the estate of the person).

Although Canadian courts have often upheld wills that are in the form of handwritten statements by the deceased person, it is more common to have a lawyer draw up a will using appropriate legal language. Dying "intestate," ie: without a will, can lead to considerable delay in dividing up the deceased person's estate.

Inheritances are taxable, and there are tax laws that limit how much can be given prior to death to avoid those taxes. Inheritances can involve complex legal issues, which should be discussed with a lawyer.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Newcomers from countries that either have one dominant religion or that lack a tradition and legal framework for religious tolerance, may find it difficult to adjust to Canadian patterns of behaviour. People whose upbringing has included an inherited tradition of distrust for people of different faiths can be disconcerted by Canada's tolerance and religious freedom, and may find themselves being accused of bigotry.

Conversely, it is easy for a newcomer who is the victim of religious bigotry to make the erroneous assumption that this experience is representative of all of Canada.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Discuss the varieties of religious experience found in the students' home country or countries. Discourage offensive stereotyping.

- Encourage discussion of religious celebrations, seeking similarities among different faiths, particularly with respect to those observations that involve families and children.

# PART FIVE

# SELF-ACTUALIZATION NEEDS

## Shared Symbols of Canada 6

The **Parliament Buildings** in Ottawa are the symbolic centre of democratic government in Canada. Situated on Parliament Hill, overlooking the Ottawa River, the Parliament Buildings house the House of Commons and the Senate, as well as the offices of members of parliament and senators.

The buildings, which include the Centre, East and West Blocks, and the Library are in the Gothic Revival style. Designed in 1859, built during the 1860s and 1870s, it was re-built after a spectacular fire in 1916 that destroyed all of the Centre Block except the circular library. The main clock tower, originally called the Victoria Tower was rebuilt in 1917, and re-named the Peace Tower. The Dominion Carilloneer plays regular concerts on the carillon of bells hung in the tower.

Within the buildings, which are partially open to the public, people can visit Sir John A. Macdonald's office, preserved as he used it when he was prime minister. As they wander the corridors of the Centre Block, people notice that every corner of the stonework is embellished with carvings, some of them caricatures, some of them animals, birds, flowers — all of them unique and distinctively Canadian miniature works of art.

The distinctive shape of the Parliament Buildings is frequently used to symbolize democratic government in Canada, sometimes with the distinctive architecture simplified to an icon.

Throughout the summer months, tourists watch the Grenadier Guards and the Governor General's Footguards perform a ceremony called "The Changing of the Guard." Each July 1, on Canada Day, Parliament Hill is the setting for a celebration that includes bands, a stage show and displays of fireworks.

# Part 5 Chapter 1 **Citizenship - Becoming a Canadian Citizen**

## Core Concept

Canadian citizenship allows you to participate in all aspects of life in Canada.

## Something to look forward to ...

In addition, Canadian citizens may:

- Vote and run for political office in federal and provincial elections,
- Travel outside Canada on a Canadian passport,
- Enjoy full economic rights that include the holding of some public service, business, professional and commercial positions, and
- Be eligible for some pension benefits.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

People do not have to renounce their origins to become Canadian. Canadian citizenship is membership in a multicultural society. In many cases, Canadian citizenship allows people to retain their previous citizenship, as well as their ties of affection with their former homeland.

Every newcomer should become aware of his or her former country's laws with respect to becoming Canadian. Some countries do not recognize dual citizenship, and will insist that a person remain in that country should he or she return there on a visit. In some instances this may mean staying long enough to complete compulsory military service. The sensible approach is to check ahead carefully before visiting any country that may have claims upon a vistor under its own laws, from which Canadian citizenship will not be a protection.

## Citizenship

*What do you have to know to become a citizen of your country?*

To become a Canadian citizen, a person must:

- Speak and understand either English or French,
- Be 18 years old or older to apply on your own behalf,
- Be a permanent resident,
- Have resided in Canada for a total of three years within the four years before your application for citizenship,
- Know about your rights and responsibilities as a Canadian citizen,
- Take an oath (or affirmation) of citizenship.

*What would prohibit you from becoming a citizen of your country?*

People cannot become a Canadian citizen if they:

- Are considered a risk to Canada's security,
- Are under a deportation order,
- Are in prison, on probation or on parole,
- Have been convicted of an indictable offence within the past three years.

*What oath or promise do you make as a citizen of your country?*

The Canadian Oath of Citizenship, can be sworn on a holy book of choice (for example, the *Bible* or the *Koran*), or affirmed.

> "I swear/affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors, according to law and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen."

*Are there ceremonial or nominal leaders in your country?*

As newcomers learn when they study to become a Canadian citizen, Queen Elizabeth II is a Constitutional Monarch. That is, as the Queen of Canada and head of The Commonwealth (of which Canada is a part), she holds the position of nominal or ceremonial leader, as distinct from people such as Premiers and Prime Ministers who are elected to hold political office. As queen, Elizabeth II inherits an unbroken tradition of nearly a thousand years of British monarchy. She is queen for life, which means that she is not obliged to retire. No Canadian taxes go to support the Queen. While the Queen is head of the Church of England in Great Britain, she has no such role in Canada.

The Queen's Representatives in Canada are the Governor General of Canada, and the ten Lieutenant-Governors of the Provinces. These men and women are all Canadians, chosen by the Canadian government, and approved by the Queen as her representatives. They serve in their positions for a limited time, usually five years. Their role in government is limited: they may only "advise and consent."

The Queen's representatives provide continuity to government at the time of elections: they receive and authenticate the "writ" that dissolves Parliament before an election, and they confirm the results of an election by inviting the leader of the winning Party to form a government.

Between elections, the role of the Queen's Representatives is mainly symbolic and ceremonial. They provide "Royal Assent," which is the last formal step in lawmaking. Royal Assent is provided by the Governor General for the Parliament of Canada as a whole, and by the 10 Lieutenant-Governors for their respective provinces. The importance of the Queen's Representatives to Canada lies in their moral authority as leaders who are "above" and apart from Party politics.

See also Part 2 Chapter 5, Canadian Government, an Introduction

*Is there compulsory "national service" in the armed forces in your country?*

Canada has no "national service." The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) are made up of Canadians who have chosen a professional military service career. The CAF have frequently been part of international peacekeeping contingents. In addition, there are the "Reserve Units," of volunteer, part-time military personnel, who, in addition to their civilian jobs, learn many of the tasks of the regular armed forces, so that in times of crisis such as natural disasters, there are people trained to work in a military context.

Canada is a member state of NATO, and has contributed peacekeeping forces to UN missions in many parts of the world. Lester B. Pearson, Canadian prime minister from 1963 to 1968, proposed the first UN peacekeeping force in 1956.

*Why would a person choose to change his or her citizenship?*

Citizenship is a confirmation of a newcomer's choice to come to Canada. It is a commitment that offers privileges and rights on the one hand, and asks loyalty and participation on the other. Most newcomers feel that they owe it to themselves, their children and to Canada that they involve themselves fully in the country to which they have come, and share fully in the benefits.

*Why did you choose Canada when you decided to leave your native country?*

When newcomers to Canada look back at their decision to leave their native countries, they often discover that moment to be a watershed in their lives. Before, their lives seemed mapped out in advance by people and forces other than themselves. After, they discovered that they could make their own way and take responsibility for their own lives. In a sense, they could re-start their lives outside the context of what they had been and done, who their parents were, and what people thought of them.

Virtually all newcomers who have enjoyed success since coming to Canada are willing to say that they have had to work hard to take advantage of the opportunities that Canada offers. Some will talk about the difficulties they had initially in adapting to life in Canada, and though many remember those who were prejudiced or hostile to them, most have stories about those who helped them learn to deal with new situations. Many feel strongly that they have taken control of their own lives in ways that would have been impossible in their country of origin.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

There is no way to "get around" Canada's immigration laws, and there are no payments or special considerations that will ensure Canadian citizenship.

Generally speaking, *there is no need to have a lawyer to help you immigrate or acquire Canadian citizenship for yourself or anyone else.* Occasionally, a lawyer may be necessary; and there are legitimate, honest lawyers who can help newcomers with any such legal problems. There are also unscrupulous people, some of them lawyers, who promise ways to "get around" citizenship and immigration rules. If in any doubt about the honesty of someone offering advice, the basic rule is to check the individual's reputation through several different and unrelated recommendations from people or institutions known to be trustworthy.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about the nature of citizenship in various countries.

- Invite students to quiz each other about Canada and Canadian citizenship in the manner of a spelling bee.

- Provide English and French words to, and teach students to sing "O Canada."

- Show symbols of Canada: maple leaf, flag, Mounties, beaver, etc., and discuss their use and meaning.

# Part 5 Chapter 2 **Personal Goals**

## Core Concept

Canada offers the opportunity to shape one's own life in pursuit of personal goals. With that opportunity comes a responsibility to look after one's self and family, and also to contribute to the larger community which is Canada.

## Something to look forward to ...

Canadian society offers education, training, equal opportunity laws and in some cases employment equity programs to help people achieve their goals.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

Canada's balance between individualism and societal obligation is based on the ideas of freedom and responsibility. Canada offers opportunity, but demands that one take responsibility not only for one's own self and family, but also for the social system that provides the opportunities. People get help on the assumption that they will give help, either directly by what they do, or indirectly through the taxes they pay.

*Are there roles, jobs, professions and callings that are exclusive to a particular race, class, religion or sex in your country?*

The ideal enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and echoed in law is that nobody should be arbitrarily denied opportunity on the basis of race, class, sex, religion, or age or disability. This ideal and the laws that uphold it does not mean that equal opportunity has been realized in all cases, only that there is recourse to law with the prospect of redress if someone arbitrarily practices discrimination against you unfairly.

This ideal and the laws that uphold it are to help people achieve their goals through their own merit and ability. Freedom from arbitrary discrimination allows everyone to compete on an equal basis.

When the focus is on abilities, skills, education, experience, knowledge and willingness to work and produce, such matters as hiring and promotion decisions concentrate on what people do, rather than on the group to which they belong. Under these circumstances, the country as a whole is more productive, and individual members of it more likely to enjoy a sense of fulfillment.

"Employment equity, " (ie: the deliberate redress of historic inequalities) is practiced by government, some universities and some businesses. Employment equity involves deliberately employing women, First Peoples, disabled people, or those from visible minorities so that the workplace is representative of Canada's multicultural nature. Police forces, and the federal public service are examples of government organizations that have in some cases recognized the need to practice employment equity.

*In your country, is it possible to change one's career, job and lifetime objectives?*

Newcomers who come from societies that are relatively inflexible — where once a person makes a career choice, the consequences last for a lifetime — are often confused by the Canadian job market. In particular, they frequently have difficulty dealing with the idea of retraining oneself and re-starting the course of one's life in a new direction.

On the one hand, they may cling to qualifications and training that are simply not economically viable in Canada for reasons that have to do with the market forces of supply and demand. On the other, they may misunderstand the concept of education and retraining as a "free good" to which they are entitled by right.

In Canada, many people have more than one career in a lifetime. Women, in particular, are not limited by the choice to have children. They can also or subsequently re-train and re-educate themselves for jobs and careers.

*Is there a social group in your country that falls below the line of economic self-sufficiency?*

In Canada, as elsewhere in the world, there is chronic, multi-generation unemployment, and people whose lives seem doomed to be unacceptably limited. Canada's private and public social security system ensures that people do not starve, but even the best efforts of social workers, educators and government agencies are not wholly successful in alleviating unemployment.

This segment of society in Canada includes people of all origins and descriptions. Unhappily, the statistics show us that single-parent families headed by a woman, as well as members of the First Peoples are among the most likely to become trapped below the lowest rungs of the economic ladder.

Canada expends considerable human and financial resources to cope with this problem. Some argue that there should be more help, some debate what kind of help, some suggest more incentives, some suggest penalties, but all agree that the cost in human lives is not acceptable. Whether one thinks in terms of compassion and concern, or whether one merely calculates the economic costs, the situation requires correction.

## Corollaries that are often difficult to grasp

Newcomers from many societies are surprised to discover that the state can and will intervene within a family to protect women and children in particular from abuse or physical and economic oppression.

In Canada, there are limits on how and who you can employ that are imposed at both the federal and provincial levels.

- Minimum wage laws protect employees, and it is possible to object to unjust firing, discipline or demotion that is based on sex, race, religion or disability.
- Safety standards protect employees from unsafe machinery or workplaces.
- Child labour laws control the hours and types of work that can be offered to minors.
- Full-time employees must receive holidays, and employers must deduct income taxes and certain compulsory payments such as Canada Pension Plan (in Quebec, the Quebec Pension Plan). Self-employed people must also contribute.

- Workers' Compensation provides benefits in the event of accident or injury.
- Unemployment insurance, jointly paid by employers and employees in some types of employment provides a bridge between jobs for those who have qualified.

NOTE: *Employing family members does not exempt the employer from observing these laws and regulations.*

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

If newcomers feel that they are being exploited, or that the information they have been given is false, they should check with an authoritative source which will usually be the appropriate branch of the federal or provincial government. Particularly in the case of problems involving employment (minimium wages, labour standards and practices) the provincial departments of labour are appropriate sources of information. If necessary, governments usually arrange to have matters explained in the complainant's own language by someone who both understands the situation and can be trusted to give the objective truth.

*In your country, would it be possible to think that discrimination had taken place on the grounds of race, sex, religion or disability, when in fact there was some objective reason?*

Not all acts of illegal discrimination are reported, and some acts that are reported are not illegal discrimination. In each province there is a Human

Rights Commission that investigates and deals with such allegations as fairly to all concerned as is possible.

If they have been accustomed to a society in which some groups or classes automatically receive special dispensations, newcomers sometimes feel that their rights in Canada should include these privileges. They are sometimes distressed when they find that people with Canadian qualifications, specific Canadian experience, or with work habits and attitudes prized by Canadians get jobs or promotions before they do. Sometimes, they allege that they have been illegally discriminated against. Sometimes the allegations are true, sometimes they are based on a misunderstanding. To accuse is not enough: proof must be brought to independent judgement through established procedures. This is why the provincial and federal courts, tribunals and enquiry boards concerned with unfairness and discrimination must go through pre-established and sometimes lengthy investigations in great detail.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about becoming self-supporting, either as an employee or as an employer.

- Invite a discussion on what it is to be successful. Have each person describe what it takes to be successful according to their own ideas, and then to describe how they imagine success in Canadian terms.

# Part 5 Chapter 3 **Politics**

## Core Concept

Canadian citizens may vote in federal and provincial elections and also stand for office.

## Something to look forward to...

There is an increasing trend for newcomers to be involved in the political life of Canada.

## Newcomers and Politics

*Is there a history of different peoples in your country achieving power?*

Canadian political history was at first dominated by people whose background was English and French. The Scottish and Irish were among the first groups other than the English and the French to contribute to political life, particularly as their numbers grew and their contribution to society began to make itself felt. The first prime minister of Canada was John A. Macdonald, a Scot.

More than a century later, the names of politicians and people in public life in Canada are a testament to multiculturalism when they are considered in the context of their own or their families' origins. For example: the Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, is of Irish origin; the Governor General, Ramon Hnatyshyn's parents came from the Ukraine; the family of Stephen Lewis, the former Canadian Ambassador to the UN, was originally Russian; the

Premier of Prince Edward Island, Joe Ghiz, was born in Canada of Lebanese parents; the former Premier of British Columbia, William Vander Zalm, was born in the Netherlands.

*How does someone get involved in political life in your country?*

Throughout the history of Canada, lawyers have been prominent in politics. Their education is particularly appropriate, in that they know the law and are trained to speak in public. However, there are many other backgrounds from which politicians come.

In Canada, many people first get involved in politics at the non-partisan level of municipal government, especially on school boards and other elected offices within their communities. Such positions are usually part-time and unpaid, or paid only a relatively small honorarium.

Another route into political involvement is to become a volunteer worker within a political party. Depending on the person's abilities and persistence, this can lead to positions of importance within the party, and is a route towards being nominated as a candidate in a federal or provincial election.

Credible political candidates at the provincial and federal levels are men and women with a personal history of public service. They may have served on school boards, been members of service organizations such as the Red Cross, contributed time and organizing ability to local projects, and generally be known within their constituencies. Party candidates are also known and respected within the party.

*What guarantees the political system of your country?*

The section of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms most relevant to political freedom are sections 2 and 3, as follows:

*Fundamental Freedoms*

> 2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:
> (a) freedom of conscience and religion;
> (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
> (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and
> (d) freedom of association.

*Democratic Rights*

> 3. Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly and to be qualified for membership therein.

## Elections in Canada

*How are elections managed in your country?*

In Canada, each citizen over 18 has a vote in electing the members of the federal House of Commons. (The upper house or Senate is an appointed body.) Federal elections *must* be called at least every five years, and *may* be called by the party in power at any time within those five years. In practice, this means that a federal general election takes place approximately every three to four years. Rarely, an election can be forced by the failure of a "vote of confidence." By this is meant that the party in power no longer commands the majority of votes in the House of Commons — it no longer enjoys "the confidence of the House," and must "go to the people," that is, call an election.

The candidates with the greatest number of votes are elected (a "simple majority") in each "riding" (also known as "electoral district"or "constituency"). There are 295 "seats" (ie: members, each one from a riding) in the House of Commons, of which two are reserved for the Northwest Territories, and one for the Yukon. The boundaries of the ridings are based on the principle of representation by population, so that there is roughly the same number of people voting in each constituency, *modified by* the size of the constituency. This means that although urban ridings in population centres such as Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver have a comparable number of voters, ridings in the North and West have fewer electors, but not by more than a factor of 25%.

When an election is called, people employed by the government go door to door "enumerating," that is, making lists of all eligible voters. These lists are then posted in public places in each "poll" or district in which all the electors vote at the same place, called a "polling station" (usually a school or church) so that anyone who was missed by the enumerators can have the omission corrected. On election day, only the people on the lists can vote.

Voting takes place under the scrutiny of officials sworn to neutrality, and also representatives of the candidates, if they wish. On voting day, no public electioneering (ie: persuading people to vote one way or another through radio, TV or newspapers) is allowed. By law, people are allowed time off work to vote.

Elections in Canada are by secret ballot, that is, one's choice as an elector is exclusively one's own business. When each voter enters the polling place, his or her name is checked off the list of electors by an official, who then gives the voter a piece of paper, called a "ballot," on which the names of the candidates and their parties are printed. The voter then takes the ballot behind a screen, and uses the pencil he or she finds there to mark an X beside the name of one of the candidates. The voter then folds the ballot so that the mark cannot be seen and returns it to the election officer, who places it, still folded, into a "ballot box."

At the end of the day, all the ballots are counted by the officials under the eye of the candidates' scrutineers. The results from each poll are then relayed to a central election office for each riding, where the results of that riding are counted up, poll by poll, and a winner declared. This process takes place throughout Canada, until all the winners have been named, and the party with the greatest number of winners forms the next government.

Essentially the same system exists at the provincial level to elect the provincial legislatures.

**See also Part 2 Chapter 5, Canadian Government, An Introduction**

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Politics in Canada has its own written and unwritten rules, not all of which are the same as those of the countries in which some newcomers have lived. Some newcomers feel that politics is for others, and fail to take an appropriate part in the nation's life. Other newcomers are too prone to take the advice — sometimes the instructions — of leaders among their own people in Canada. Obviously, many people from the same background are likely to have goals and interests in common, and are therefore more likely to have the same political points of view. However, newcomers should beware of people of any group who suggest that only they are interested in the well-being of newcomers; and they should be very sceptical of people who imply that there could be reprisals if they do not vote in a particular way.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about politics and politicians in the participants' own countries and as they imagine things might be in Canada. Avoid painting Canada perfect, but focus on how political rules in Canada are made and followed. The teacher's contribution to this discussion should be scrupulously non-partisan.

- Hold an election and create a model parliament. Have the "government" draw up an immigration policy.

- Make a list of government departments at federal and provincial levels, along with what they are responsible for, and how they might help a newcomer.

- Use the letters to the editorial column of a newspaper to introduce current debatable subjects in Canada.

- Introduce descriptive political vocabulary, for example "Right wing," "Left wing," "regional interest," etc.

# Part 5 Chapter 4 **The Arts, Sports, Communications**

## Core Concept

Government in Canada encourages the arts, sports, and communications.

## Something to look forward to ...

In part, this policy reflects the aspirations of a prosperous society with energy to devote to creative expression; in part, it is because the arts and sports are highly symbolic activities in terms of national and multicultural values; and in part, it echoes the worldwide recognition that the arts and sports contribute to the economic and psychic well-being of Canada.

All these aspirations require media — newspapers, television, film, radio, etc., — particularly in a country as large and diverse as Canada.

### The Arts

*Does government assist the arts in your country?*

The arts in Canada are guided both by economics and by a sense of obligation to conserve and encourage national excellence, whether or not it enjoys economic acclaim. Though national policy encourages the market-driven economics characteristic of free trade, it also protects and subsidizes the arts through such communication and cultural agencies as:

- The Canada Council, which offers grants to artists,
- The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (the CBC), which has a policy favouring Canadian artists and performers,

- The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (the CRTC), which oversees broadcasting, grants licences for TV and Radio stations, and encourages Canadian content on the electronic media,
- The National Film Board (the NFB), and Telefilm Canada which encourage the making of Canadian films,
- Other institutions such as the National Library, the National Archives, and the National Museums and Parks throughout Canada.

See also Communications, later in this chapter

*How are the arts valued in your country?*

In the past half century, Canada has experienced an unprecedented increase in all forms of artistic expression. Whereas in the 19th and early 20th century, art was for the few, and many felt that it was a "frill," a "pastime of the idle rich," or "something for highbrows;" today the arts are strongly supported by people at all socio-economic levels. The arts are taught in schools, universities, colleges, community centres and a wide variety of specialized institutions throughout the country. The cultural industries sector, which includes entertainment and the arts in general, is the fourth-largest sector in Canada, valued at $15 to $20 billion annually.

The value of the arts to individual people in Canada is not quantifiable solely in terms of dollars. Rather, it has to be seen in the context of personal fulfillment, the contemplation of life forces, and the expression of human experience that is at the same time unique and universal.

The unusual multiracial, multicultural nature of Canada is a rich source of artistic expression in all the artistic media — painting, sculpture, music, dance, drama, literature, film, television, video — and their many combinations and offshoots. Canada is rich in that there is no single factor that identifies Canadian art, but rather a wide variety of regional influences and ethnic traditions that often fuse into unique new combinations. Merely to catalogue the different First Peoples traditions in music, painting, dance and sculpture would require a major treatise, which could never catch up with the responses of contemporary artists to issues and inspirations of the moment. Moreover, an uncountable array of artistic traditions have come to Canada, where they have grown, matured, blended and been transformed.

*Who are artists in your country?*

Perhaps most importantly, the arts in Canada have become unusually democratized. People are discovering their own artistic natures, rather than simply consuming the artistic products made by others. As a result, there is an unprecedented number of musicians, dancers, writers, actors as well as practitioners of all the other art forms. More Canadians than ever before are patronizing the arts, more Canadians are practicing an art form for their own satisfaction, and more Canadians are achieving international recognition at the highest of professional levels.

## Sports

*Does your country have national sports?*

Canada's national sport is hockey. (In Canada, "hockey" means ice hockey: the other sport, "field" hockey is not widely played.) By tradition, Canadians know about hockey and their professional hockey teams in the same way that Americans know about baseball, English know about cricket, and Italians know about soccer. Hockey is an entertainment, an obsession, a universal conversational gambit.

Hockey is organized from pee-wee leagues for very small children of both sexes through amateur leagues through to the top professionals of the National Hockey League.

*What other sports are important in your country ?*

Soccer has recently become the most widely-played sport in Canada, although as yet it is not highly developed at the professional level. Baseball is both a spectator sport (Canada has two major teams) and an amateur sport at all levels. Canadian football resembles American football at first glance, but differs in the length of the field on which it is played, and by many rules. The final "Grey Cup" game that decides the Canadian football championship is an annual fall celebration.

*Does your country officially encourage amateur sports?*

Amateur sport is an important aspect of Canadian culture because of the general objective of physical fitness, and also because of the competitive drive towards excellence. The federal government encourages fitness in two ways: through a program called "Participaction," and through sponsoring Sport Canada, a national organization devoted to excellence in amateur sports. Sport Canada, among other activities, helps Canadians compete in the Olympic Games and other international amateur competitions.

*How are sports regarded in your country? As the business of professionals? As the amusement of the rich? As a characteristic of youth? As restricted to men?*

A generation or so ago in Canada, sport was largely for men, and women's sports were relegated to a secondary role. Today, there is far less stereotyping by sex or by snobbism, as more and more people realize the personal growth and satisfaction that can flow from sport and physical fitness.

More Canadians of both sexes are staying active and healthy throughout their lives, and sport offers them personal satisfactions both in doing and in encouraging others. As men and women mature, they find enjoyment in coaching younger people as well as in competing themselves. There are amateur competitions for all age levels in the individually competitive sports such as running, cross-country skiing and the other Olympic events.

## Communications

Freedom of speech and the responsibility that goes with it is clearly set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms . The section of the Charter most relevant to freedom of the media is section 2 as follows:

*Fundamental Freedoms*

> 2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:
>
> ...
>
> (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
>
> ...

The freedom of the media operates under laws and customs of long standing, particularly the laws of libel and slander that provide redress for anyone who has been maliciously lied about or defamed. In addition, there are laws in Canada that forbid what is called "hate literature" — publications that maliciously seek to forment hatred of a particular racial, ethnic or other definable group of people.

These laws specifically protect Canadians' Charter Rights. They involve a typically Canadian distinction between the individual's right to hold beliefs and speak freely, and his or her responsibility not to interfere with other individuals' exercising those same rights by promoting hatred of individuals or groups. This delicate balance between the use and abuse of rights as they affect the media has been the subject of important decisions by the Supreme

Court of Canada in its role as the interpreter of the Constitution and Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Because of the size and diversity of Canada, communications are a particular concern for Canadians.

Canada has evolved a blend of private and public ownership and control of media. There are both "private" (ie: commercial) as well as national "public" (ie: government-owned) radio and television stations and networks. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, better known as "the CBC," which manages public radio and television in the English language, and Radio-Canada, which does the same in French, are both "arm's length" government organizations.

The concept of an arm's length organization is characteristically Canadian: it means that the government funds the operation, but does not interfere with its operation. In practice this means that the professional communicators of The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and Radio-Canada choose what and when to put on the air, whether this is the choice of entertainment programming or (more importantly) the content of news and editorials.

Another arm's length organization, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, (the CRTC) administers not only the allocation of radio and TV licences, but also oversees their functioning to the extent of ensuring that certain proportions of "Canadian content" are present in the programming. This ensures that the products of Canadian artists, writers, composers, etc., are not overwhelmed by foreign material. A very important aspect of this direction given by the CRTC is that it in no way affects the stations' and networks' news content or editorial viewpoints.

Newspapers in Canada are privately owned. Whether they are fully independent, or part of syndicated chains, in all cases, the responsibility for the choice of news items and the opinions expressed in columns and editorials is solely that of the writers, editors and publishers.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

The responsibility involved in having the rights of freedom of speech and belief is sometimes difficult to grasp. Though a person has a right to sincerely hold beliefs, he or she does not have the right to impose those beliefs on anyone.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about arts, sports and pastimes in the students' own countries, and discuss expectations about what they might do in Canada. Distinguish among activities on the basis of cost as well as preference.

- Role play joining a club, team, or artistic/cultural organization. What does the newcomer bring? What does he/she want to find?

Debate the following propositions:

- Free media are necessary to a democracy.
- When there is only one view of the news, news becomes propaganda.

# Part 5 Chapter 5 **Success in Canada: What Canadians Admire**

## Core Concept

Success in Canada is generally evaluated in terms of the individual person's work and accomplishments.

## Something to look forward to ...

Though it would be naive to believe that everyone in Canada has an equal opportunity to achieve all he or she wishes, the essence of the Canadian democracy is that any individual may attempt any legal objective. He or she has the right to make choices, and to live with the consequences.

## Corollaries that are sometimes difficult to grasp

As elsewhere in the world, wealth is an important measure of personal success in Canada. However, Canadians who are generally admired are not necessarily rich, and are unlikely to have inherited anything tangible from their parents or grandparents.

## What Canadians respect

*What political achievements are particularly admired in your country?*

Canadians respect peacemakers. People who achieve peaceful solutions to emotion-laden confrontation are generally admired.

Canadians respect the memory of a man such as the late Prime Minister Lester B. "Mike" Pearson, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

*Who are the heroes of your country? What did they do to earn this respect?*

When one thinks of heroes who have reached national and international stature, names such as Napoleon, Wellington, Bolivar, Washington, Mao, Lenin, come to mind. These heroes symbolize great national achievement. They are associated with victories over an enemy, they are saviours, founders, generals, charismatic leaders. They each led a national struggle that shaped the dominant ideology of their times and countries.

Canada has no heroes in this usual sense of the word. Such is the regional, multicultural nature of Canada that names which might be proposed by one group of Canadians would be rejected by another. The lack of heroes is a facet of Canada's diversity and a national characteristic, but not a regrettable one. Moreover, the country that has no warlike heroes is also a country that does not impose the values that such heroes symbolize.

## Common problems and difficulties for newcomers

Newcomers frequently look for the "right way" of achieving success, instead of seeking their own way. This is a difficult difference to realize, especially if one has been brought up in a society with a strong sense of "correctness" or "appropriateness" that is expressed in traditions such as sons inevitably following in their fathers' career footsteps, or daughters emulating their mothers' lives and values.

Newcomers often want to achieve success immediately, and are profoundly distressed when they discover that achieving their goals takes time. Sometimes, they blame themselves unnecessarily, further adding to their problems by lowering their own confidence. Sometimes, they blame Canada and Canadians as if *every* Canadian were against them, which is demonstrably not the case.

## Discussion Suggestions

- Encourage conversations about national heroes and why they are admired.
- Invite statements about what students feel are admirable qualities.

# Afterword

Canadians reading the text of this *Source Book* will be struck by the obvious nature of many subjects and topics. However, until you are faced with defining so familiar a concept as "hardware store," you do not begin to realize the difficulty of explaining the familiar to people from a different culture. Similarly, you may find that there are facts about Canada that you thought you knew, but in fact you know somewhat inaccurately. Accordingly, relatively obvious elements have been set out in as objective a style as possible, to help the teacher or helper formulate clear, accurate answers when asked to explain something that may be obscured by familiarity.

Similarly, Canadians will find themselves thinking of exceptions to many of the generalizations that are presented here as fact. This is particularly the case with respect to statements about ideals, where it is not difficult to find examples of Canadians whose behaviour is far from fair and less than honest. This *Source Book* tries to capture how most Canadians would like their country to be, and then balances these aspirations with appropriate warnings that reality does not always live up to ideals.

Newcomers and established Canadians alike must remember that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a hollow promise unless its spirit lives in what ordinary people are and do. The Charter and the human rights it sets forth are not to be taken piecemeal as a means by which one individual or group can gain unfair advantages. Human rights are indivisible and universal: one cannot pick which rights to accept, or choose the people to whom they apply.

This universality of human rights implies a corresponding universality of responsibility. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms defends the integrity of the individual person, and everyone and anyone in Canada can call for the protection it offers. It therefore follows that upholding the Charter and its ideals is everyone's responsibility. Without that participation, the Charter is mere words on paper.

Many Canadians fear the changes that are taking place in Canada. They are unsure of concepts about Canadianness that seemed so certain when they were children that it was not necessary to express them in words. Once, it seemed possible to think of Canada as exempt from the strife that tore other nations apart. Today, Canadians are confronted by evidence that the seeds of hatred grow in Canada as they do elsewhere.

Unhappily, under such circumstances there are always those who seek a scapegoat to blame for the discomfort they feel. "If Canada's problems are more like those of the rest of the world," runs this fallacious argument, "then it must be because immigrants have brought them here." This twisted line of thinking forgets that all but the Inuit and Indians are descended from newcomers. It also ignores nearly three centuries of Canadian history during which Canadians have frequently faced the problems of disunity and confusion of goals that are inescapable in any free society — particularly one characterized by an Aboriginal origin, a bilingual history and multiculturalism.

Newcomers have always played a key role in the shaping of Canada, and will continue to do so. Often, they come from countries whose crises make Canada's internal debates look insignificant by comparison. Such people bring with them the hope that in Canada they will live peaceful and fulfilling lives. Virtually every one of them comes with the strong desire to leave hatred and fear behind them.

*Canada, A Source Book* is the first element of an initiative dedicated to welcoming newcomers to Canada.

# For Further Reading

## General

*The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Hurtig, Edmonton, 1988. ISBN 0-88830-326-2 (4 vols. - specify English or French.) $

*Canada Year Book, 1990,* Supply and Services Canada, 1989. Catalogue No. 11-402. (Specify English or French.) $

*The Canadian World Almanac & Book of Facts, 1990,* Global Press, 1989. ISBN 0-7715-3983-5. $

*The National Atlas of Canada*, 5th Edition, Energy, Mines and Resources, 1985. NA-0001. (Specify English or French.) $

*A Social History of Canada*, George Woodcock, Penguin Books. $

*The Sears Catalogue; The Canadian Tire Catalogue.*
These materials have been recommended by ESL/FSL teachers for their usefulness in terms of explaining clothing, appliances etc., and for stimulating discussion among learners.

## Banking

*Helping you Bank. Your guide to bank accounts, cheques & banking machines,* The Canadian Bankers' Association, 1989.
Written in basic English. It also has a glossary of banking terms. Free.

## Citizenship

*Applying for Citizenship,* Citizenship ESL/Literacy Materials, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship & Federal Department of the Secretary of State, 1987.
ISBN 0-7729-3238-7. (Student's workbook - $.)

*Becoming a Citizen,* Citizenship ESL/Literacy Materials, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship & Federal Department of the Secretary of State, 1987.
ISBN 0-7729-3241-7. (Student's workbook - $.)

*The Canadian Citizen,* Secretary of State/Multiculturalism and Citizenship: CTR-7-B.
Designed for use by applicants for Canadian Citizenship. Covers the basics of what one should know about Canada to become a citizen. Free.

*Dealing with Canadian Citizenship Enquiries,* Secretary of State/Multiculturalism and Citizenship: CTR-1-B.
Questions that might be asked by an applicant re process of applying for citizenship. Free.

*Dual Citizenship,* Secretary of State/Multiculturalism and Citizenship: CTR-4-B.
What dual citizenship means, advantages and disadvantages. Free.

*How to Become a Canadian Citizen,* Secretary of State/Multiculturalism and Citizenship: CTR-6-B.
Answers questions of who is a Canadian citizen and who can apply for

citizenship, and provides a step-by-step guide to applying for citizenship. Free.

*How to Prove You are a Canadian Citizen,* Secretary of State/Multiculturalism and Citizenship: CTR-2-B.
Covers rights of citizenship and the citizenship certificate. Free.

*More of a Welcome than a Test . A Guide for Individuals Involved in Assisting Adult Immigrants in Preparing for Citizenship,* by Sydney Pratt.

## The Family

*Current Demographic Analysis. New Trends in the Family. Demographic Facts and Features,* Statistics Canada, 1990. Catalogue No.: 91-535. (Specify English or French.)
A useful resource for teachers having to respond to questions about what constitutes a typical Canadian family and family behaviours. Relatively technical with tables and information from 1986 census data. $

## Geography

*Discover Yourself in Canada's National Historic Sites,* Environment Canada, Canadian Parks Service: R62-103/1988. (Specify English or French.) Photographs and descriptions of each of the parks. Would be useful in discussions of geography and history. In addition to a small map of Canada that has each park marked, it also has a chart of symbols found in the parks. Free.

*Discover the Magic in Canada's National Parks,* Environment Canada, Canadian Parks Service: R64-180/1988. (Specify English or French.)
Photographs and descriptions of each of the parks. Would be useful in discussions of both Canada's geography and types of recreational activities enjoyed by Canadians. Has a small map of Canada with location of each park marked. Free.

*Geography,* Citizenship ESL/Literacy Materials, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship & Federal Department of the Secretary of State, 1987.
ISBN 0-7729-3239-5. (Student's workbook - $.)

## Government

*Government,* Citizenship ESL/Literacy Materials, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship & Federal Department of the Secretary of State, 1987.
ISBN 0-7729-3240-9. (Student's workbook - $.)

*How Canadians Govern Themselves,* Eugene Forsey, House of Commons. (Available at public libraries.)

*Teachers' Guide to Government in Canada,* Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, 1987. ISBN 0-7729-2973-4.
Photo stories and essays for students of ESL. Free

## Immigration

*Business Immigration Program Kit,* Employment and Immigration Canada: IM-003/11/89.
Covers immigration regulations, guidelines and procedures; the Canadian economy; and, government programs, services and contacts. Free.

*Canada's Immigration Law,* Employment and Immigration Canada: IM008/90.
Easy to read overview of the immigration law. Free.

*Coming back to Canada. Returning resident permits,* Employment and Immigration Canada: WH5-017/12/86.
Describes the benefits of having a permit, how one applies and what happens if one returns to Canada without a permit. Free.

*Domestic Work in Canada,* Employment and Immigration Canada: IM011/11/89.
Overview of requirements, entry status, availability of training programs, protection, and fees. Free.

*Immigration Application Fees. Some Helpful Information,* Employment and Immigration Canada: IM-076/3/90. Free.

## Justice

*Canada's System of Justice,* Department of Justice: Supply and Services Canada: J2-32/1988. (Specify English or French.)
Deals with such topics as the history of our law, court structures and procedures, jury duty, getting legal advice, testifying, the future of law in Canada. Relatively reader friendly. Free.

## Multiculturalism

*Eliminating Racial Discrimination in Canada,* Secretary of State/ Multiculturalism and Citizenship: Mul-80-B.
Valuable comparisons between the ideal of multiculturalism and the reality in Canada. Reader friendly with lots of photographs and boxed excerpts. Free.

*Multiculturalism ... being Canadian,* Secretary of State/Multiculturalism and Citizenship: MUL-70-B.
Describes the evolution of multiculturalism in Canada - the philosophy, legislation and policies. Free.

## Refugees

*After you arrive in Canada. Information for government-assisted refugees,* Employment and Immigration Canada: WH5-106/9/87.
Overview of arriving in Canada, going through Customs, clothing needs,

getting to your final destination, at your final destination, visiting the Canada Employment Centre, language training, finding work and getting settled. Free.

*Claiming refugee status in Canada,* Employment and Immigration Canada: IM058/11/90.
Describes steps involved in claiming refugee status. Provides examples of general questions that might be asked. Free.

$ = a cost for the publication

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# Suggestions

*Canada, A Source Book for Orientation, Language and Settlement Workers* is a continuing project that is dependent upon feedback from all those who use it. New editions will respond to the needs of orientation and settlement workers, teachers, leaders of cultural orientation programs, and will also update facts and figures where necessary. It would be helpful if you could also tell us something about you and your organization. Please fill in as much as you feel is appropriate of the following questionnaire.

Mail to: Settlement Branch
Employment and Immigration Canada
Place du Portage, Phase IV
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0J9

## Your Suggestions

What would you like to add to *Canada, A Source Book for Orientation, Language and Settlement Workers* ?

What specific corrections, changes or additions would you like to see in the next edition?
For example: any changes in tone, content and formatting. Please feel free to go into details and to explain your suggestion.

What new sections, features, concerns would you like to see in the next edition? Please suggest sources of expertise.

*(Please feel free to add more pages if you need them.)*

## A. Identification

1. Your Organization

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

______________________________ (   ) - ________ ________

Official registered name, address phone postal code

2. Your organization's special goals or Mission Statement

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

3. Your organization's other services in addition to working with newcomers

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

Please continue on the back of page or on another sheet of paper.

4. Your organization's staff and clients

Number of staff in your organization:

Volunteer____ Paid Full Time ____ Paid Part Time _____

How many of these are involved with newcomers at least 20% of their time?

Volunteer____ Paid Full Time ____ Paid Part Time _____

Helper-newcomer ratio in your classes: _____ helper to ____ newcomers

Number of current newcomer clients: _____ per Week, Month, Year

newcomers now being helped by your organization — circle appropriate time period

## B. Basis-of-judgement questions

5. What languages do you speak?______________________________

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

Give language(s) plus skill level: "fluent" / "proficient" / "basic".

6. a) How long have you worked with newcomers? ____________________

Month and year of beginning to assist newcomers as a paid worker / teacher / volunteer

b) Are they usually refugees, immigrants or family sponsored immigrants?

Please circle appropriate response.